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Dr. G.P. BHATT

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PART III

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY

Dr. N.A. DESHPANDE

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

But he has neither the means nor the leisure to embark on that course. We have, therefore, planned to help him acquire knowledge by an easier course. We have started the series of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology in English Translation. Our goal is to universalize knowledge through the most popular international medium of expression. The publication of the Purāṇas in English Translation is a step towards that goal.

PREFACE

This is the third part of the *Padma Purāṇa* translated into English and the 41st Volume of the *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* series. Herein are included Chapters 1-90 of Bhūmi-khaṇḍa or the Section on the Earth which is the second of the seven sections into which the Purāṇa is divided.

The reader would naturally expect, as the name 'Bhūmikhaṇḍa' suggests, a description of the geography and history of the Earth in this section, but will actually find nothing like that. And this is true about all the sections. As a matter of fact, the names of the sections here as well as in the other Purāṇas are just arbitrary, having in the present shape no relevance to the contents. Perhaps in the remote past or originally they had a relevance but in the course of time their logical structure was lost and a lot of interpolation made them all alike dealing with similar topics irrespectively of the names assigned.

As usual, this part contains a number of well-known legends, especially those of Vena, Pṛthu and Yayāti, and also the oft-repeated myths of the slaying of the demons Bala and Vṛtra, Hiraṇyakaśipu and Hiraṇyākṣa, the birth of Maruts, the anecdotes of Ikṣvāku's hunting, Diti's wailing and the like.

The section begins with the story of Śivaśarman and his virtuous sons whose devotion to parents is put to severe test and finally established as constant and firm. The glorification of devotion to parents (*pitṛbhakti*) is again taken up in chapters 63 and 84 and parents are given as high a status as that of a sacred place of pilgrimage in chapter 62. One will find allegorical description of body and soul in chapters 7 and 8. In the story of Suvrata (Ch. 11) four kinds of sons are described followed in the subsequent chapters by the enumeration of the basic virtues and the post-mortem status and suffering of the virtuous and sinners respectively. The virtue of *dāna* (charity) is highly praised and treated of in detail along with a description of those who deserve it and the fruits of making gifts to Brāhmaṇas and other deserv-

ing persons (Chs. 38-40). The fruits of *nityadāna* (regular charity) and *naimittikadāna* (occasional charity) are described in detail separately.

Devotion to god Viṣṇu is a recurring theme of this section, though it is also said that all the gods of the Hindu Trinity—Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, are equal. To propitiate Viṣṇu a number of vows are enjoined and the recitation of a hymn containing a hundred names of the god is recommended as giving salvation in chapter 87. Yayāti is mentioned as the greatest patron of the Vaiṣṇava faith. It was during his reign that Vaiṣṇavism enjoyed the greatest propularity.

Chapter 37 countains (unfortunately) an adverse reference to Jainism. There a heretic, who is none else but a follower of Jina, is described who is dead against the Vedic religion, who by his radical doctrines turns king Vena away from the practice of Dharma and makes him a sinner leading ultimately to his total ruin.

Acknowledgements

It is our pleasant duty to put on record our sincere thanks to Dr. R.N. Dandekar and the UNESCO authorities for their kind encouragement and valuable help which render this work more useful than it would otherwise have been. We are grateful to Dr. N.A. Deshpande for translating the text. We are also thankful to all those who have been helpful in our project.

—*Editor*

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ABBREVIATIONS

Common and self-evident abbreviations such as Ch(s)—Chapter(s), p—page, pp—pages, V—Verse, VV—Verses, Ftn—footnote, Hist. Ind. Philo.—History of Indian Philosophy are not included in this list.

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona
AGP	S. M. Ali's *The Geography of Purāṇas*, PPH, New Delhi, 1973
AIHT	*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F. E. Pargiter, Motilal Banarsidass (MLBD), Delhi
AITM	*Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* Series, MLBD, Delhi
AP	*Agni Purāṇa*, Guru Mandal Edition (GM), Calcutta, 1957
Arch.S.Rep.	Archaeological Survey Report
AV	*Atharva Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Bd. P.	*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, MLBD, Delhi 1973
BG	*Bhagavadgītā*
Bh. P.	*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad
Br.	*Brāhmaṇa* (preceded by name such as Śatapatha)
BS. P.	*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Vishnu Shastri Bapat, Wai
BV. P.	*Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*, GM, 1955-57
CC	*Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi* by Hemādri
CVS	*Caraṇa Vyūha Sūtra* by Śaunaka, Com. by Mahidāsa
DB	*Devī Bhāgavata*, GM, 1960-61
De or GDAMI	*The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, N. L. De, Oriental Reprint, Delhi, 1971
Dh. S.	*Dharma Sūtra* (preceded by the author's name such as Gautama)
ERE	*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* by Hastings
GP	*Garuḍa Purāṇa*, ed. R. S. Bhattacharya, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1964

GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P. V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varanasi, 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇi*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	Monier Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	*Nāradiya* or *Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣiya Prācina Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd.P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English version, MLBD, Delhi. 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, R. C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Śat.Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā* by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

II BHŪMIKHAṆḌA
(Section on the Earth)

CHAPTER ONE

The Story of Śivaśarman

Om, salutation to Śrī Gaṇeśa.

The sages said:

1-2. O glorious Sūta, O you who know the significance of the essence of everything, (please) listen to the terrible doubt, destroying understanding, that has occurred to us. Some describe in the Purāṇas that when Prahlāda was five years old he pleased Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu).

3. How did (the war) between gods and demons come about? How did the demon fight with Viṣṇu? He, killed by Viṣṇu, entered his body.

Sūta said:

4. This was formerly known (i.e. conceived) by Kaśyapa and was composed by the intelligent Vyāsa. It was formerly narrated by Brahmā himself before (i.e. to) the lord Vyāsa.

5. I shall, O brāhmaṇas, describe the same before (i.e. to) you. The cause of the doubt that arose was removed by Brahmā.

Vyāsa said:

6. O Sūta, O glorious one, listen to (the account) of the birth of Prahlāda as told in the Purāṇas and as heard (i.e. learnt) from other (sources).

7. As soon as Prahlāda, the greatest among the devotees of Viṣṇu and honoured by gods, was born, he resorted to the path of Viṣṇu, giving all happiness.

8. With his sons he went to the battle-field to fight with Viṣṇu. Being killed by Viṣṇu, he entered Viṣṇu's body.

9-10a. Listen to the birth of just this magnanimous one. The brave one, going with his sons to fight with Viṣṇu, entered Viṣṇu's lustre, which he obtained through his own lustre.

10b-11a. O glorious one, I shall narrate in brief the account of that hero—how that powerful one was born in the former Kalpa.

11b-12a. At the extreme point in the west of the ocean, there was a city by name Dvārakā. It was full of all magnificence and all prosperity.

12b-13a. There perpetually lived a divine (man) knowing abstract meditation, and the best among those who knew abstract meditation, known as Śivaśarman, who was well-versed in all Vedas and sacred texts.

13b. He had five sons who were well-versed in (all) branches of knowledge.

14. (They were:) Yajñaśarman, Vedaśarman, Dharmaśarman, the glorious Viṣṇuśarman, who knew their own duties.

15a. The fifth one was Somaśarman, who was greatly devoted to his father.

15b. The best brāhmaṇas knew no other duty than devotion to their father.

16a. The magnanimous ones (always) had thoughts about him (only).

16b-17a. Seeing their devotion, the intelligent, best brāhmaṇa Śivaśarman, thought: 'I shall extort (these) learned men.

17b-18a. They do not have that feeling in their mind which is found in the devotees of Viṣṇu. I shall, therefore, find it, and will do so thoughtfully.'

18b. Due to the favour of Viṣṇu, he had all superhuman faculties.

19-20a. O best of Brāhmaṇas, he conceived a fine idea to suggest to them (what their duty was). The best brāhmaṇa, the best among those who knew Brahman, knowing a remedy due to the lustre of his penance, adopted it.

20b-21a. Then Śivaśarman presented before them a trick. He showed their mother to be dead of a great fever.

21b-24a. They saw their dead mother, and said (these) words to their father: "O glorious one, she, who nourished us in her womb, has, casting her body, been dead. Having left (us), she has gone to heaven. O father, what can be said (by us)?" Śivaśarman, the excellent brāhmaṇa, called his eldest, most devoted son, Yajñaśarman and said to him.

Sivaśarman said:

24b-25a. With this very sharp and whetted weapon cut off her limbs and throw them here and there.

25b-27. The son did it as he had heard (i.e. received) his father's order. He came back, and again said (these) words to his father: "O father, I have done everything as I was ordered. Today (i.e. now) entrust to me some other work. O father, I shall do it all, (even though) it (enemy/thing) be difficult to subdue or procure".

28-30. Having ordered the glorious one, devoted to his father, the brāhmaṇa (i.e. Śivaśarman), thinking of the second son, called (him viz.) Vedaśarman (and said to him): "Go by my order; being stupefied by passion of love (i.e. sex) I cannot stand without a woman (by my side)." He presented, by means of his magical power, a woman full of all charm (before Vedaśarman). (He told him:) "O boy, determined for me, bring this woman to me."

31a. Thus told, he said: "I shall do what is very dear to you."

31b-33a. Having saluted his father, and having gone from there, he said to her: "O respectable lady, my father tormented by the arrow of love, seeks you. So be favourable to him who is old. O you beautiful lady, O you one whose all limbs are charming, resort to my father."

33b. Thus (i.e. these words) spoken by Vedaśarman were heard by the woman created by magic. The woman said:

34-35a. "I do not at all long for the company of your father who is afflicted with old age, whose mouth has malady due to phlegm, and who is now afflicted with diseases, who is feeble, who is sick and old.

35b-36. I desire to dally with you, I shall do what is very dear to you. (I desire to dally with you) who are adorned with good fortune like a (handsome) form, and with gems of virtues, who are endowed with divine characteristics, who possess a divine form and great prowess.

37. What will you do with (your) old father? O you who destroy the pride (of others), by enjoying my body you will obtain all things difficult to obtain.

38a. O brāhmaṇa, there is no doubt that I shall give you whatever you desire."

38b-41. Hearing these disagreeable and evil words,

Vedaśarman spoke:

O respectable lady, your words are unjust, improper and mixed with sin. Do not talk like this to me who am devoted to my father and who am innocent. O auspicious one, I have come to you and am soliciting you for my father. Do not talk something else; (please) resort to my father. O you respectable lady, O you beautiful one, there is no doubt that I shall give you everything in the three worlds, with the mobile and the immobile—even more than the kingdom of gods.

The woman said:

42. If, for the sake of your father, you are thus capable of giving me (anything), then show me, today only, the great gods with Indra.

43. Indeed you are able to give me now what is difficult to be obtained. O glorious one, show me what power you possess.

Vedaśarman said:

44. O respectable lady, see the power of my penance. The best gods, Indra and others, being invited by me, have come.

They said to Vedaśarman:

45. O best brāhmaṇa, what should we do?. O brāhmaṇa, we shall give you, whatever you ask for. There is no doubt about it.

Vedaśarman said:

46. If the gods are pleased with me and are inclined to favour me, then they should give (i.e. produce in) me pure devotion to the feet of my father only.

47. (Saying) "Let it be so", the gods left as they had come. (The woman) seeing (the gods had come) like that said to him: "I have seen the power of your penance.

48-49a. I have nothing to do with the gods; if you want to give me (what I want) and if you are taking me for your father,

then do that (which is) dear to me; O brāhmaṇa, cutting off your head with your own hand, give it to me."

Vedaśarman said:

49b-50a. Today I have become blessed; I have been free from the three debts.[1] O respectable lady, I shall give my head; O beautiful one, do take it.

50b-51a. Having cut off his own head with a whetted and sharp weapon, the best brāhmaṇa, gave it to her and laughed.

51b. She took it, covered with blood, and went to the sage.

The woman said:

52-53. O brāhmaṇa, your son, Vedaśarman, has sent this head; take it; he had himself cut off his own head. For you, he, devoted to his father, gave me his head. O best brāhmaṇa, enjoy me.

54-56a. The brothers (of Vedaśarman) saw the daring act of Vedaśarman. Their bodies trembled (and they said to) one another: "Our virtuous mother died with real intentness. This glorious, virtuous one died for the sake of (our) father. He is blessed, he has become fortunate (as) he has done an auspicious (deed) for (our) father."

56b-58. Thus the virtuous brothers talked (to one another). The brāhmaṇa heard these words full of devotion, and knowing that his son, Vedaśarman, had cut off his (own) head, said to Dharmaśarman: "Take this head".

1. *Ṛṇatraya*—Everyone that is born has three debts to pay off, viz. Devaṛṇa, Ṛṣiṛṇa, and Pitṛṛṇa. The first is paid off by performing sacrifices, the second by learning the Vedas and the third by begetting a son.

CHAPTER TWO

Life is Restored to Vedaśarman

Sūta said:

1-2a. Then taking it the virtuous one quickly left. By his devotion for his father, his austerities, and the power of his truthfulness and straightforwardness, Dharmaśarman attracted Dharma (i.e. Yama).

2b-3a. Attracted by the penance of that intelligent (Dharmaśarman), Dharma, who had come (there), said these words to Dharmaśarman:

3b-4a. "O Dharmaśarman, why did you invite me? I have come. Then tell me about your work. I (shall) do it. There is no doubt about it."

Dharmaśarman said:

4b-5a. If I have (properly) served the elders, if I have devotion and steady penance, then, O Dharma, let Vedaśarman be alive, due to that (and) due to my truthfulness.

Dharma said:

5b-6. O you of a good vow, as a result of your purity with restraint, truthfulness and penance, and due to your devotion to your father, your great-souled brother Vedaśarman, of mighty arms, will again obtain (i.e. come to) life.

7. O you highly intelligent one, I am pleased with this your penance and devotion to your father. Well-being to you; ask for a boon difficult to be obtained by those who know righteousness.

8. That Dharmaśarman thus heard those good words. He, of a great glory, said to the magnanimous Vaivasvata (i.e. Dharma or Yama):

9. "Give me steady devotion to the worship of my father's feet, and also liking for piousness and salvation, if you are well-pleased with me."

10a. Then Dharma said: "This will take place by my favour."

10b-11a. When these very significant words were uttered, the very wise Vedaśarman got up, as if he had slept; he said to Dharmaśarman:

11b. "O brother, where has that respectable woman gone? Where would be the father?"

12. He told him in brief how the father had appointed him. Knowing that, Dharmaśarman, who was delighted, said to him:

13. "O glorious one, O brother, be favourable to me today only with (my having restored your) head and life. Who else is there like you to me on the earth?"

14. Saying so to his brother he was eager to go to his father. He (i.e Vedaśarman) decided to go, with his brother Dharmaśarman, to their father.

15-17a. Both, delighted in their minds went to their father there (i.e. to the place where he was). Both stood close together. Then Dharmaśarman spoke to his father, the excellent and lustrous Śivaśarman: "O glorious one, due to my penance and life Vedaśarman has been brought (back). (Please) take him—your son."

17b-18a. Then Śivaśarman, knowing his devotion, was delighted; (but) he did not say anything to him, and thought.

18b-23. He (then) spoke to the very intelligent Viṣṇuśarman, who politely remained before him: "Child, do as I say. Today go to Indra's heaven and fetch nectar from there—the nectar that came up from the ocean and that destroys diseases. Now I desire to stay with this wife (of me). With good (intention) she desires me. Do that quickly so that I obtain her; otherwise she may go to other (man). Knowing me to be old this young beautiful woman might think lightly of me. O son, if you are devoted to me, do that by which I shall, in the company of this one dear to me, be faultless and free from disease."

24-25a. Hearing these words of his magnanimous father, Viṣṇuśarman then said to his father of a blazing lustre: "I shall do all this that pleases you most."

25b-27. Speaking thus, that pious, very intelligent Viṣṇuśarman saluted his father and went round him keeping him to his right, and due to great power, penance and restraint, went into the intermediate region between heaven and earth.

When the intelligent one was (thus) going, he went to Indra with the speed of a violent wind.

CHAPTER THREE

The Heroic Deed of Viṣṇuśarman

Sūta said:

1. Proceeding along that path, he entered the heaven. He was seen by the intelligent Indra, the lord of gods.

2-4a. Knowing his exertion, the king of gods put in an obstacle. He said to that (nymph) Menikā: "Go by my order; O you of beautiful waist, going quickly create an obstacle (in) his (way). Well-being to you. Do that to the son of that excellent brāhmaṇa Śivaśarman by which he would not come to my house." Hearing these words of him, Menikā started quickly.

Sūta said:

4b-6. She, who was endowed with beauty, and virtues like generosity, and adorned with all ornaments, sat on a swing in Indra's garden. That clever one with large and charming eyes, singing, in a sweet voice, like the notes of a lute, a song (was seated on the swing).

7-8. Knowing her intention of causing a great obstacle, and realising that, she, being sent by Indra, would not be favourable, the best brāhmaṇa went quickly. She saw him and asked him: "O you highly intelligent one, where are you going?"

9. Then Viṣṇuśarman spoke to that Menikā, who moved according to her will: "I am hurriedly going to Indra's heaven for my father".

10-11a. Menikā again spoke pleasing (words) to Viṣṇuśarman.

11b-12. "Being pierced with Cupid's arrows, I have today sought your shelter. O best brāhmaṇa, if you desire to protect piety, (please) protect me. When I, with my mind affected by passion of love, saw you, then only I was burnt by fire of Cupid.

I am bewildered, I am tormented by love. Please be disposed to favour me."

Viṣṇuśarman said:

13-15. O you of a beautiful face, the character of the lord of gods is known to me. I also know your character. O you auspicious one, I am not like this. O you lovely lady, other men like Viśvāmitra are deluded by your lustre and beauty; O you respectable lady, I am the son of Śivaśarman who has attained divine faculties through abstract meditation and is accomplished in penance. I have avoided the great blemishes like desire for sensual enjoyments right from the beginning.

16a. O you of large eyes, choose someone else; I am going to Indra's world.

16b-17. Saying so, the best brāhmaṇa went hurriedly. Menakā was unsuccessful. Being asked by god Indra she repeatedly scared him in many ways.

18. (All) those scares (put forward by her) were burnt as the heaps of hay are burnt by fire.

19. O excellent brāhmaṇas, all those terrible scares perished due to the lustre of that brāhmaṇa, devoted to his father.

20. That Indra again and again presented obstacles; the brāhmaṇa of great glory destroyed them by his lustre.

21. Thus by means of the lustre of his penance, the intelligent one destroyed all the obstacles created by even that magnanimous Indra.

22-25a. When those great, fearful obstacles disappeared, he, knowing that those obstacles (i.e. scares) which were fierce and of fearful forms, were brought about by Indra, the best brāhmaṇa Viṣṇuśarman of great lustre became angry. The glorious one, with his eyes red due to anger (said) about Indra: "Today I shall cause to fall down from his heaven Indra, who would create an obstacle to me engaged in my own duty. I shall punish him; he, who would strike, is struck.

25b. I shall thus make someone else as the guardian of gods."

26. Thus the best (brāhmaṇa) became ready to destroy Indra. Just then only Indra arrived there (and said:)

27-28. "O brāhmaṇa, O you very wise one, there is none else like you in penance, restraint, self-control, truth and purity. Due

to this your devotion to your father, I with (all other) deities have been won over (by you). O best one, (please) forgive all my fault.

29. Well-being to you, ask for a boon, I shall give it (even if) it is difficult." Then Viṣṇuśarman spoke to the king of gods who had come like that:

30. "O great Indra, the lustre of a brāhmaṇa is unbearable for gods and deities. O lord, it is (especially so) in the case of a brāhmaṇa who is devoted to his father.

31-32a. Destruction of the dignity of magnanimous brāhmaṇas should never be done. If the best brāhmaṇas are angered, they destroy Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Hara along with their sons and grandsons. There is no doubt about this.

32b-35. Had you not come today, then, I, with my eyes full of anger, would have given this best kingdom to some other person, magnanimous due to the prowess of his penance. Now that you have come, and desire to grant a boon, (then) O lord of gods, give me nectar and steady devotion to my father. O you killer of (your) enemies, if you are pleased, grant me such a boon." (Indra said:) "So I shall give you a pious boon with nectar."

36-38a. Speaking thus to the brāhmaṇa, Indra himself gave him nectar. He, with his heart pleased, gave it along with the pitcher. (He also said:) "O brāhmaṇa, may you always have unswerving devotion to your father." Speaking in this way, and having dismissed the brāhmaṇa, the thousand-eyed (Indra) became pleased on seeing the brāhmaṇa's lustre, very difficult to endure.

38b-42. Then Viṣṇuśarman, having gone to his father, said to him: "O father, I have brought from Indra, nectar, that destroys all maladies. O glorious one, with (i.e. by taking) it be healthy always. Today be greatly satisfied with (this) nectar." Hearing these great words of his son, Śivaśarman, with his mind full of love, having called all his sons, (said to them): "(My) sons, you are devoted to (me) your father, and you do what I tell you. Be pleased (my) sons, and ask for a boon difficult to be obtained on the earth." All listened to his words with approval.

43-45a. Having pondered, all of them said to their father: "Bring back to life that mother of us, who has gone to the dwelling

of Yama. May she, of a good vow, be healthy due to your favour. O father, may you be (our) father, and this one (our) mother, even in existence after existence, and may we be your meritorious sons."

Śivaśarman said:

45b-46a. Even today, your dead mother, affectionate to her sons, will come alive; there is no doubt about it.

46b-47a. When these auspicious words were uttered by the sage Śivaśarman, their mother arrived (there) and being delighted said (these) words:

47b-50a. "A brave son is born from one's womb for this purpose only. Men desire a good son, who would bring glory to his family and race. In the world, glorious, meritorious and pure and affectionate women everywhere desire a son of a pleasing body and bringing about merit. That woman, the very meritorious foetus after having gone into whose womb revolves there, and who would give birth to meritorious sons, is pleased.

50b-56a. How can a woman obtain, without merit, the best son, performing duties peculiar to his family, prop of the family and emancipating the father and the mother? I do not know due to which meritorious deeds (of mine) this very meritorious man, having piety as his power, righteous, and loving piety has become my husband, from whose semen I have obtained you as my sons, superior to him. This is the power of merit. You, my sons, are born as loving virtue and intensely devoted to your father. Oh, in the world even one good son is had by means of religious merit. (But see,) I got five great-hearted sons, who are sacrificers, who are righteous, and who have the prowess due to the lustre of penance." When they were thus repeatedly congratulated by their mother, they, being full of great joy, saluted their mother.

The sons said:

56b-58a. Due to great religious merit (only) a mother—a good mother or a good father is obtained. You are a virtuous mother, who became so due to our good fortune, and having reached whose womb we were nourished as a result of our great

virtue. In existence after existence you two should be our mother and father.

The father said:

58b-59a. O my sons, listen to a good boon, causing religious merit. When I am pleased, may my sons enjoy inexhaustible pleasures.

The sons said:

59b-60a. O father, if you are pleased, and desire to give a boon now, then send us to Goloka, the heaven of Viṣṇu, which is free from tormentation.

The father said:

60b-61a. By my favour, your penance, and this your devotion to (me) your father, go, with your sins perished, to Viṣṇu's heaven.

61b-64a. When the sage said good words, then (Viṣṇu) having the conch, disc and mace in his hands and mounted upon Garuḍa, came there; and repeatedly said this to Śivaśarman with his sons: "O brāhmaṇa, today you with your sons, have won me over by your devotion. With your four virtuous sons and this virtuous and very loving wife come (to me)".

Śivaśarman said:

64b-65. May these (four) sons of me go to the excellent heaven of Viṣṇu. I shall pass some time on the earth with my wife and this last, excellent son, Somaśarman.

66-67a. When the sage, who (always) spoke the truth, uttered these auspicious words, the lord of gods said to those good sons of Śivaśarman: "May they go to the world causing salvation and free from tormentation and destruction."

67b-71. When this was said (by the Lord), all the four brāhmaṇas of truthful hearts, in a moment only took up Viṣṇu's form. In complexion they resembled sapphires; they had held conch, disc and mace; were charming on account of all ornaments; had great prowess; were endowed with the beauty of necklaces and bracelets; they looked charming due to jewelled

necklaces; they resembled the sun's lustre and were covered with bright flames. They entered Viṣṇu's body when Śivaśarman was looking on (i.e. in Śivaśarman's presence). As lights go to another light, they became absorbed in Viṣṇu's form. The best brāhmaṇas, due to their devotion to their father, went to Viṣṇu's abode. I shall tell accurately the prowess of Somaśarman.

CHAPTER FOUR

Somaśarman's Devotion Put to Severe Test

Sūta said:

1. When they had gone to the Goloka of Viṣṇu, beyond darkness, the very wise Śivaśarman said to his youngest (son):

The brāhmaṇa said :

2-3. O very wise Somaśarman, you are very much devoted to (me) your father. Now protect this pitcher of nectar given by me. With this wife I shall go on a pilgrimage.

"O glorious one, let it be so. I shall protect the auspicious (pitcher)".

4. The intelligent one (i.e. Śivaśarman) having given the pitcher into the hands of the magnanimous one, continuously practised penance for ten years.

5. The righteous one (i.e. Somaśarman) carefully protected the pitcher day and night. Then that Śivaśarman of great fame again came back.

6. Using a trick the very wise one, becoming (i.e. turning himself into one) afflicted with leprosy, (making) his wife also like that, came, with his wife, to his son.

7-12a. The two had become lumps of flesh, as they were made so by his trick. They came near that violent (*ghora*?) brāhmaṇa Somaśarman. Somaśarman, of great glory, seeing them completely afflicted, was full of great compassion. With his neck bent through devotion, he saluted their feet (and said:) "I have never seen (persons) like you. (I have not seen anyone

else) endowed with penance, with hosts of virtues and great religious merit. What has happened to you? O best of brāhmaṇas, all deities, attracted by your lustre, getting your order, always behave like your servants. Tell me the cause, O best brāhmaṇa, by which this painful disease has appeared on your wretched body?

12b-15a. This my meritorious mother, who is a loyal wife and has great religions merit, desires (i.e. is capable) to create the three worlds due to her husband's favour. How does she suffer pain? Is there no fruit of penance? How is it that she, who is affectionate to the elders, and who serves her husband as a god, contracts an extremely painful disease like leprosy?"

Śivaśarman said:

15b-16a. O glorious one, do not be sorry; the fruit due to his deeds is enjoyed by a man who has (done) a good or a bad deed.

16b-17a. O glorious one, if you desire religious merit in this world, then clean both of us who are suffering from the disease, and nurse us.

17b-19a. Thus addressed with good words, Somaśarman of great glory (said:) "I shall nurse you both who are meritorious. O best of brāhmaṇas, what has one to do (i.e. what would one get) in this world, if one does not nurse one's elder today (i.e. at the present time) only?"

19b-28a. Speaking thus, he who was grieved due to their malady, cleansed the phlegm, urine and excrement of both of them. He washed their feet and shampooed their bodies. He himself bathed them and helped them to stand. The best and virtuous brāhmaṇa, Somaśarman, of great glory, placing them on his shoulders took them to sacred places. The virtuous (Somaśarman), conversant with the Vedas, bathed them according to sacred precepts with his own hands, and with (the recitation of) auspicious, excellent, sacred hymns, and made both of them offer oblations to the manes and worship to the deities everyday. He himself offered ghee for gods into fire and cooked excellent food. He then called both the respectable elders, well-pleased with him (for food). The brāhmaṇa (i.e. Somaśarman) everyday put them to sleep on a bed. Daily he gave them garments, flowers etc. He offered very fragrant tāmbūla to both of

them. The glorious Somaśarman everyday gave them roots, water, good eatables etc. Somaśarman, of great glory, daily gave them whatever they desired.

28b-29a. In this way he always pleased them. The very pious Somaśarman (everyday) worshipped his parents.

29b-34. Calling Somaśarman, his cruel father (Śivaśarman) always abused him with censurable and harsh words; and in the presence of the sages he everyday beat his son who did his duty and did meritorious deeds. (He said to him:) "O you, disgrace to the family, you have not done well to me (i.e. have not served me properly)." He condemned him with many harsh and painful words. That Śivaśarman who was always sick, beat him with the strokes of a stick. Even though Śivaśarman did (i.e. treated him) like this, he (i.e. Somaśarman) who was pious, was never angry with him. Always happy in mind, speech and the three kinds of deeds Somaśarman propitiated his father; similarly he also daily propitiated his mother, knowing which Śivaśarman considered his own behaviour.

35-46. (He thought:) 'Viṣṇuśarman brought nectar for me. That righteous one has religious merit and is always devoted to (me) his father.' When thus many days which can be counted in hundreds, passed, Śivaśarman too, seeing his devotion, thought: 'Formerly I had told by son named Yajña (i.e. Yajñaśarman): O son, throw here and there the pieces (of the dead body) of your mother. He obeyed my words (i.e. order), and did not show compassion for his mother. This grief of one who desires to give strokes on an inanimate body is smaller; but that son Vedaśarman did a bold act; but I think that this one is superior since he does not swerve (from duty) even for a moment. He may also again do a rash act. Again he has the prowess, along with truth, due to penance. Even in everyday attendance he appears excelling (others). So at the right time I have tested his penance. (This my) son will never perish because of his devotion and truthfulness. I showed the disease of leprosy on my body through illusion; (but) he does not have disgust for phlegm, urine or excrement. He, of a great glory, cleanses the sores with his own hand. The very intelligent one shampoos (our) feet and cleanses us (i.e. our bodies). He always puts up with unbearable words (uttered by) me. (Even though I) reproached and beat (him), he always

talks pleasing words. Thus my very intelligent son is unhappy. I think that he, who is troubled with many afflictions, is the ocean of maladies. I shall remove his unhappiness by the favour of Viṣṇu.'

47-53a. Thinking (thus) in his mind (i.e. to himself), the very intelligent Śivaśarman, again created the illusion and took away the water (i.e. the nectar) from the pitcher. Then afterwards, having called that Somaśarman, he said to him: "I had given (i.e. placed) in your hand nectar, that removes maladies. Give it to me quickly, so that I shall drink it. By (drinking) that I shall today be free from the disease due to the favour of Viṣṇuśarman." When the sage Śivaśarman uttered these words, Somaśarman hurriedly got up (and rushed to) the pitcher. Seeing it empty (that is) without nectar (he thought:) 'Which sinful person has done this deed? Who has thus harmed me?' Somaśarman was thus worried and very unhappy. 'If I tell this account before (i.e. to) my father, he—my father—tormented by the disease, will be angry.'

53b-55. For a long time the very intelligent Somaśarman thought (to himself): 'If I have truth and have served the elders or have practised penance with a sincre mind, or have observed the proper code of conduct by means of restraint, purity etc. then this pitcher will have nectar in it. There is no doubt about it.'

56. When the glorious one thought (like this) and saw, the pitcher was again full of nectar.

57. Seeing it, Somaśarman of a great glory, became joyful, and going to his father, saluting him, quickly fetching the pitcher (said to him):

58. "O father, please take this pitcher of water (i.e. nectar) that has come (i.e. is brought by me). O magnanimous one, drink it, and quickly be free from the disease."

59-60. Hearing these greatly meritorious and truthful and righteous and sweet words of (i.e. uttered by) his son, Śivaśarman was full of great joy and said these words:

CHAPTER FIVE

The Consecration of Indra

Śivaśarman said:

1. O good son, today I am pleased with your penance, restraint, purity, and with your service to the elders and your devotion and resolution.

2. I (shall) abandon this deformed body; obtain happiness from me.

Saying so to the son, he showed him that (former) body.

3. He saw both the elders (i.e. his parents), who became as they were before, who were bright, who were magnanimous and who resembled the orb of the sun.

4-5. He devoutly saluted the feet of both the noble ones. Then full of great joy, he, the best one, took his leave of his son, and due to Viṣṇu's favour, his own religious merit and the practice of abstract meditation, the pious one went, with his wife, to Viṣṇu.

6-8. That sage entered Viṣṇu's abode, a place difficult to be obtained. This place granting salvation is not obtained by means of other (kinds of) religious merit or penance, or by means of meditating upon Viṣṇu, or renunciation, or contemplation, or knowledge, or hymns of praise. Viṣṇu is not seen by means of gifts or pilgrimages. The highest place is seen (only) by resorting to concentration and knowledge, as the brāhmaṇa entered Viṣṇu's body by means of deep and abstract meditation.

Sūta said:

9-10. Then that very lustrous Somaśarman practised penance there. He also looked upon gold and ornaments like a stone or a clod of clay. The righteous one had controlled his diet, he had given up sleep. Giving up all objects of senses he resorted to solitude.

11-12a. He had taken to the posture suited to profound and abstract meditation, was desireless and had no possessions. Then the time of his death arrived. Demons came to that brāhmaṇa, Somaśarman.

12b-16. When the time of death of him who was living (like that) at the great sacred place, Śāligrāma, adding to the honour of sages arrived, some demons and goblins who knew thus (i.e. knew that his death was imminent), spoke. The great sound (of the words uttered by them) entered the cavity of the ears of Somaśarman, the best brāhmaṇa. Fear of the demons entered him, who had adhered to knowledge and meditation. Due to that meditation and the fear of the demons the life of the noble one quickly departed. Being full of the fear of the demons he died.

17-18. Therefore, he was born in the house of the demon (Hiraṇyakaśipu) as Hiraṇyakaśipu's son. In the war between gods and demons he was killed by Viṣṇu. The noble Prahlāda, while fighting well saw (the form of) Vāsudeva, endowed with the universal form.

19. Due to his former practice of abstract meditation, the noble one had the knowledge (of his former birth, so) he recollected all the former life of Śivaśarman:

20-22. "Formerly, I whose name was Somaśarman, entered the body of a demon. When shall I, due to my great religious merit, called knowledge, reach, from (i.e. casting) this body, the absolute, pious, excellent, abode granting salvation?" The noble Prahlāda, thought like this when he died formerly; O best of brāhmaṇas, listen. I have thus told you everything that removes (your) doubts.

Sūta said:

23-25a. When Prahlāda was killed in the battle by the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), the lord of gods, that beautiful woman, Kamalā, whose son was killed, wept. She was the mother of Prahlāda and the beloved (wife) of Hiraṇyakaśipu. Due to the grief caused by Prahlāda's death she, the loyal, glorious wife, (of Hiraṇyakaśipu), who was dear to him, lamented day and night.

25b. Nārada spoke to her, who was weeping day and night:

26-27a. "Do not grieve, O noble and meritorious one, for your son. Your son, the very intelligent one, who is killed by Viṣṇu, will come back endowed with his own (former) characteristics.

27b. He will again have his name as Prahlāda.

28-30a. He will be without the demonish thoughts, and will be endowed with godhead; he will be saluted by all gods and will enjoy the position of Indra, O good lady. O illustrious lady, always be happy with that son. (Please) do not reveal this good news to anyone. You should feign ignorance, and always keep this as a great secret."

30b. Saying so, the brāhmaṇa, the best sage, Nārada, left.

31-33. He (i.e. Prahlāda) got an excellent birth in the womb of Kamalā (i.e. Prahlāda was born as the son of Kamalā). He was named Prahlāda; the account of that illustrous one (will be narrated by me). O brāhmaṇas, when he was a child, he thought of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) only. Due to the favour of Narasiṁha (i.e. Viṣṇu) he would be the king of gods in heaven. After having obtained godhead, he would also get the position of Indra; he, the all-wise, will attain salvation—Viṣṇu's abode.

34. There are innumerable glorious individuals, there are many forms of creation. (So) the great-souled, wise ones should not commit errors.

35-36. O best brāhmaṇas, I have told you everything that you have asked. O glorious one (ones) you may ask anything else. I shall remove your doubt: (I shall tell you about) the victory of gods and the destruction of demons brought about by the lord of gods, and (about) how he re-established the three worlds.

The sages said:

37. Who got the position of Indra, which sustained the title of gods? O best of brāhmaṇas, tell (us) in detail, who gave (him) the position of Indra?

Sūta said:

38. I shall tell you in detail for which best merit the best one, the glorious one, obtained the position of Indra.

39-40. When all the demons were killed in the great war, and when the sinners were completely annihilated by the magnanimous Viṣṇu, gods along with gandharvas, nāgas, vidyādharas, spoke, with their palms foldedi nobeisance, to Mādhava (Viṣṇu):

41. "O venerable one, O lord of gods, O Hṛṣīkeśa, our salutations to you. We are going to tell you something respectfully; (please) understand all that.

42-43a. O Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu), make for (i.e. give) us a ruler, a protector, who is meritorious; (give us) a god, a king, viz. Indra, who is righteous and who would rule the worlds, and resorting to whom the beings in the three worlds would obtain happiness."

Vāsudeva (i.e. *Viṣṇu*) *said*:

43b. O you illustrious ones, the best brāhmaṇa, endowed with the Viṣṇuite lustre, lived in my heaven for a long time.

44-48a. O you best gods, the period of stay in my heaven of that brāhmaṇa, that magnanimous devotee of me, was over. Due to Viṣṇuite lustre in him the pious one will be your guardian; and he loves righteousness; he, the best pious brāhmaṇa, will be your king and supporter for protecting you. The large-hearted son of Aditi will be known as Suvrata. He, the very powerful and very brave one will be Indra.

Sūta said:

48b-49. In this way, the lord of gods, granted best boons to the gods; then all the victorious and best gods went with Viṣṇu to see their father, Kaśyapa, and their mother.

50. The magnanimous ones saluted both (the parents) seated comfortably. Full of great joy, and with the palms of their hands joined, they said:

51. "Due to your favour we have attained to godhead." Full of great joy, he (i.e. Kaśyapa) spoke (these) words to the gods:

Kaśyapa said:

52a-55a. You have always been following the virtuous path. Due to our favour and the power of penance, you have attained to the position of gods which is inexhaustible. To these I (now) give a boon: Full of great love you—gods, nāgas, gandharvas and great deities—will be immortal, will not be subject to old age,

will be imperishable, will have all your desires satisfied, and will be endowed with all perfections.

Viṣṇu said:

55b-56a. Well-being to you, O successful mother of gods; ask for a boon. I shall certainly give you whatever is desired by your mind.

Aditi spoke:

56b-59. O Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu), due to your favour I had become a mother. I obtained these sons that are immortal, ageless, eternal, and righteous and affectionate, O Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), (please) listen: O Govinda, you are one who fully satisfies all desires and gives prosperity. Remaining in my womb (you should be born as) my son, so that with you as my son I shall be delighted. O lord, thus satisfy my desire, leading to prosperity.

Vāsudeva said :

60-65. For the mission of gods, you should go to (i.e. take up) a human form. Then I shall surely remain in your womb. O goddess, when the twelfth yuga comes, I shall, for removing the burden of the earth, and for killing all the kṣatriyas, be (born as) your son, viz. (Paraśu) Rāma, Jamadagni's son, the best of brāhmaṇas and endowed with valour and lustre, and best among all those who wield weapons. Similarly, when the twentyseventh yuga called Tretā arrives, I shall be, O loyal wife, (born as) your son, named Rāma. O you of pious mind, when at the end of Dvāpara, the twentyeighth yuga arrives, I shall be undoubtedly (born as) your son, by name Vāsudeva (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), for the destruction of all demons and for removing the burden of the earth.

66a. O you auspicious one, now please do what I tell you.

66b-70a. O you goddess, who grant everything, having created an omniscient, handsome son, I shall give him the position of Indra, (so that) he too will be Indra.

Having heard thus that due to the favour of the lord of lords the son will be Indra, she was full of great joy. (She said:) "O magnanimous one, let it be so; I shall do as you tell me."

Then all the deities, free from fear and full of joy, went to their own abodes.

Sūta said:

70b-71. Having gone to Kaśyapa after she was in menstruation, the high-minded Aditi (said to him:) "O revered one, give me a son who will enjoy the position of Indra." The brāhmaṇa (i.e. Kaśyapa), having thought for a moment, said to the high-minded lady:

72-82a. "O illustrious one, let it be so. You will have a son, who will be the creator of the three worlds and also enjoyer of the sacrifices." Having put his hand on her head, the lustrous, best brāhmaṇa, who was endowed with truth and piety, practised penance. O best of brāhmaṇas, he (i.e. the son) would always live in the heaven of Viṣṇu. O best of brāhmaṇas, when his religious merit would be exhausted, be would, due to (the fruit of) his acts, fall from there; then he, of a great penance, would go to the womb of Aditi, with the desire to enjoy the position of Indra. Due to her truthful and meritorious deeds, and due to her religious merit and penance, the goddess conceived. Having gone to reside in a forest, she practised penance without laziness. A hundred divine years passed, when the mother of gods was (thus) practising penance. She practised penance difficult to be practised by gods and demons. She, bright with that penance and lustre, resembling the sun's lustre and (looking) like another sun, resorted to meditation and shone brightly. Then due to the lustre of her penance, she looked superior in her beauty (i.e. looked more beautiful). That goddess, Dakṣa's devout daughter, engrossed in penance and meditation, and feeding herself on air, shone more (i.e. looked more beautiful). All siddhas and sages, and gods of great prowess, closely intent (on looking after her), praised and protected the illustrious one.

82b-84. When a full hundred years were over, Viṣṇu came there. He said to that illustrious Aditi, endowed with penance: "O goddess, the foetus has fully developed; the time for delivery has come; the foetus is nourished by your penance and grown by your lustre. O you glorious one, today only you deliver the embryo."

85-89. Speaking thus, the lord of the gods went to his own

abode. When a very prosperous time arrived, the goddess delivered a son, who was lustrous, who was as it were another sun, who was pleasing, who was charming in all limbs, who was endowed with all (good) characteristics, who had four arms, whose body was huge, who was regent of a quarter, who was the lord of gods, who was covered with lustrous blazes, whose hands looked lovely on account of disc and lotus; who, the very intelligent one, shone with a face resembling the orb of the moon, who was very wise, who was adorned with the lustre of Viṣṇu, with other good characteristics and divine disposition, who was full of all (good) characteristics, whose face was like the moon, whose eyes resembled lotuses.

90-92a. The gods, the sages who had mastered the Vedas, gandharvas, nāgas, vidyādharas, the seven sages, of inferior and superior prowess, came there. Other virtuous, magnanimous sages, giving merit and auspiciousness, with their minds full of joy also came there.

92b-94. When that glorious one of great prowess was born, all revered gods, all mountains, ascetics, milky and other oceans, unsullied rivers, all those that were affectionate and other mobile and immobile objects came there. All lords of gods happily celebrated (the occasion) with auspicious rites.

95-102a. The hosts of the celestial nymphs danced and the gandharvas sang songs. Gods and sages who had mastered the Vedas praised the magnanimous son of Kaśyapa with Vedic hymns. When he of great prowess was born, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra and all the Vedas together with the Vedāṅgas and the Upāṅgas[1] came there. All the beings in the world that were endowed with religious merit came there only, when he of great prowess was born. With auspicious great festivals all of them performed sacred rites. The three gods led by Brahmā, as well as Kaśyapa and Bṛhaspati, of great prowess and full of joy and worshipping him, performed the naming ceremony of that magnanimous one. (They said:) "You will be known as Vasudatta; you are also (named) Vasuda; your names will be Ākhaṇḍala, and also

1. *Sāṅgopāṅgaiḥ*—With Aṅgas and Upāṅgas. The six Vedāṅgas are: (1) Śikṣā (Phonetics); (2) Kalpa (Rituals); (3) Vyākaraṇa (Grammar); (4) Nirukta (Etymology); (5) Chandas (Metrics); and (6) Jyotiṣa (Astronomy). The Upāṅgas are said to be: Purāṇa-nyāya-mimāṁsā-dharma-śāstrāṇi.

Marutvān; you will also be known as Maghavan, Biḍaujas, and Pākaśāsani." (They said to Aditi:) "This your son will also be known as Śakra and Indra."

102b-105. All the deities, pleased and delighted in mind, gave these names to that magnanimous one only. The great gods took bath and performed the purificatory rites. Having called Viśvakarman, they gave that magnanimous one propitious and divine ornaments. All the gods of great prowess were thus glad when that glorious, magnanimous king of gods was born.

106-108. On an auspicious day, at an auspicious time, the magnanimous gods consecrated him with auspicious rites and established him as Indra. By the favour of the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) he obtained the position of Indra. That Vasudatta, the lustrous lord of gods, practised penance. He was endowed with brilliant lustre, and had held weapons like the thunderbolt, the noose, and the goads.

Sūta said :

109. Seeing the great, entire power of penance, Śukra uttered a verse : "In the worlds, there will be none else as much handsome as this one.

110. This other great magnanimous one has obtained this divine grandeur by Viṣṇu's favour.

111. None else, of a strong power due to penance will there be in the worlds, who can be compared with this one".

CHAPTER SIX

Diti's Wailing

Sūta said :

1-2. The other miserable wife of Kaśyapa, named Danu, being tormented by the grief due to the son (of Aditi) came to Diti's house. She was weeping, she who was reached by (i.e. was full of) great grief, saluted the two lotus-like feet of Diti. Diti advised her.

Diti said :

3. O glorious one, what is the cause of your weeping? Women are (said to be) 'Putriṇī (i.e. endowed with sons) (even though) they have (only) one son. O beautiful, auspicious one, you are the mother of even a hundred magnanimous sons like Śumbha.

4-7a. Tell me the reason why you are unhappy—(you) who have the two magnanimous and very mighty and valorous sons like king Hiraṇyakaśipu and the very mighty Hiraṇyākṣa. O friend, tell me why you are having this great grief. Tell me fully the reason for which you are weeping now.

7b. Having thus spoken to the queen (i.e. Danu), the high-minded (Diti) ceased speaking.

Danu said :

8-9. See, see, O magnanimous one, the desire of my co-wife (i.e. Aditi) has been fulfilled by the god of gods—the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu). As Viṣṇu had formerly granted a boon to Aditi, even now he has granted a great boon to her son.

10. This son is known to be born from Kaśyapa, and is the guardian of the three worlds. Snatching the position of Indra from your son, he has given it to him (i.e. to Aditi's son).

11-12a. (Now) Aditi, who is full of desires (i.e. whose desires are fulfilled) is exalting with happiness, (since) her younger son, Vasudatta, along with the gods, is enjoying Indra's position which is very difficult to be obtained.

Diti said :

12b-13. O you glorious one, tell me of which position my very intelligent son is deprived; O friend, (tell me) also how other demons and goblins are deprived of lustre. Tell me in detail the cause of this.

14a. Saying (these) words to her (i.e. to Danu), Diti, who was extremely unhappy, stopped speaking.

Danu said :

14b-16a. Gods and demons, being enraged, went to fight (i.e. fought). A great war, causing the destruction of the demons, took place. The gods and Viṣṇu struck down my sons in the war;

so also your sons (were struck down) by the god of gods, viz. the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu).

16b-20. As a lion would frighten with his own lustre (beings) that have gone to the forest, in the same way your sons and my sons were killed by him having the conch in his hand (i.e. by Viṣṇu). He destroyed, crushed, made to flee, and unnerved the army (of the demons) led by Kālanemi and unconquerable even for the gods and demons (together). As, in the forest fire would burn grass with its flames, so Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu) completely consumed all the hosts of demons. Many of my sons, O respectable lady, and many of your sons also died (in the war). As all the moths perish after reaching (i.e. coming in contact with) fire, similarly all the demons reaching (i.e. coming in contact with) Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), perished.

21a. Diti thus listened to this fearful account.

Diti said :

21b. O you good one, how do you tell me this, which is like the fall of the thunderbolt?

22-23a. Saying so, that respectable lady fell down in a swoon. She, who was very much oppressed by the grief due to her son, said : "Alas ! a misery has come about; it is very troublesome and tormenting."

23b-32a. Seeing her, the greatest sage said (these) auspicious words: "Well-being to you; do not weep; O you illustrious one, persons like you, who are energetic and free from greed and infatuation, do not grieve like this. O honorable lady, in this mundane existence, to whom do the sons belong? To whom do the good relatives belong? One has nothing to do with anyone (else). O dear one, listen to it all. You are the daughters of Dakṣa and are my beautiful wives. O auspicious one, I am your husband, who fulfils your desires. I bring you together; I am your guardian, and protector, also, O you of a beautiful face. Why did the cruel demons, not controlling themselves, entertain enmity (with the gods)? O you magnanimous one, your sons are destitute of truthfulness. Due to that fault (of them) and due to your morbid affection (for them), O auspicious one, they were killed by Vāsudeva (i.e. Kṛṣṇa, i.e. Viṣṇu) and were thrown down by the gods. Therefore do not entertain grief which destroys real

salvation. Grief would destroy (i.e. destroys) religious merit, and one perishes by the loss of religious merit. Therefore, O you of a beautiful face, give up the grief being of the nature of an obstacle. Due to the power of their own faults the demons died. The gods were (just) an apparent cause; they (i.e. the demons) were destroyed by their own deeds. Realising this, O you glorious one, be happy".

32b-33. Having thus spoken to his dear wife who was unhappy, the very intelligent, great contemplative saint, withdrew through dejection and stopped (speaking).

CHAPTER SEVEN

Account of the Body

Diti said :

1-2. O Lord, you have spoken all the truth; there is no doubt about it. Abandoning love for my husband, I entertained rivalry (with my co-wife), O brāhmaṇa. (Now) being tormented by pride, agony, humiliation and great grief, I shall, O best one, give up my life.

Kaśyapa said :

3-5. (Please) listen, I shall tell (i.e. explain) you in such a way that there will be (i.e. you will have) peace (of mind). O auspicious one, nobody is anybody's son, or mother or father. Nobody has a brother or a relative. None has kinsmen and friends. In the mundane existence such is the relation, affected by illusion and infatuation. O respectable lady, one is one's own mother, one's own relatives and kinsmen. One is oneself the eternal moral virtue.

6-8. O you honourable lady, a man becomes happy due to (good) conduct. He surely perishes due to bad conduct and sin. Due to this he even goes to (i.e. is born in) a wicked species; there is no doubt about this. A man, deluded by an untruthful act and a great sin, always remains as an enemy of (other) beings. Here

and there (i.e. everywhere) he has enemies; there is no doubt about this.

9. O you dear, auspicious and beautiful lady, when a man lives in a friendly way, he has friends everywhere.

10-11. O respectable lady, when the seed is concealed (underground) and is well-placed, the farmer gets the fruit exactly in accordance with it. Similarly your sons have vied with the good. Enjoy the fruit of that deed that has come to you.

12-13a. O illustrious one, your sons are destitute of penance and peace; due to that sin they have fallen from a great position. Realising this, be tranquil, and give up pain or pleasure.

13b-14a. To whom do the friends belong? To whom do relatives and friends belong? Beings live happily in accordance with their own deeds.

14b-15a. Due to their knowledge of the reality, the wise and the glorious do not think about another's interest. (To do so) is futile; there is no doubt about this.

15b-21a. The body is constituted of the five elements, and is just infirm because of the joints. O respectable lady, with a hope for happiness, it has befriended everything. Ātman (i.e. the soul) is greatly meritorious, omnipresent, and sees everything; he is virtuous, and grants all (kinds of) prosperity. Thus occupying everything, and being untinged, he, O respectable lady, moves all alone. While (thus) moving, he saw, in a secluded place, four meritorious best brāhmaṇas, (as it were) great power embodied. The fifth one was Wind, the friend of the former (four). Then the soul sought the help of Knowledge. The illustrious one, seeing them, said to Jñāna (Knowledge): "O Jñāna, see these five; they are consulting one another. Go to them and talk to them. Ask them: 'Who are you?' "

21b-22. Hearing those very significant words of that glorious one, Jñāna (Knowledge), propitiating him, said to him: "What have you to do with them? Tell me the truth (since) you are always pure."

Ātman (soul) said:

23-24. These five are glorious, handsome and high-minded. I shall go, meet them, and shall speak to them. O Jñāna (Knowledge), listen: I shall speak to these worthy ones, who have come

to the fifth one viz. Speed (i.e. Wind). O Knowledge, be (my) messenger; you are skilled in the act of a messenger.

Jñāna (Knowledge) said:

25-26. O soul, listen to my words, I am telling you the truth, and the truth (only). O dear one, O you of pure heart, you, desiring for the good, should never have the company of these five. O you very intelligent one, this Moha (i.e. Infatuation) is longing for your company.

Ātman (the soul) said :

27. Why do you, O Jñāna, avoid the company of these? O wise one, tell me the real reason of this.

Jñāna (Knowledge) said:

28. There will be great grief just due to their company. These five are the root of grief and cause affliction and tormentation.

Ātman said:

29. Let it be so; I shall do as you tell me.

That Ātman, (thus) speaking to Jñāna, associated himself with Dhyāna (Meditation).

Kaśyapa said:

30. Then all the five saw that Ātman. Having called Buddhi (Intellect) they said to her: "Be united with Ātman only.

31-32. O you auspicious one, act as the messenger between Ātman and us. O Buddhi, having gone to him say to him: 'The five elements,[1] the magnanimous ones, the supporters of the world and the auspicious ones desire your friendship.' You have to do this mission of ours. (Please) go from here." (*Buddhi said*:)

33. "Let it be so; O glorious ones, I shall carry out this best mission of you." Having thus spoken to them, she went to that Ātman, and said to him:

1. The five elements are: Earth, Water, Fire. Wind and Ether.

34-35. "O blessed one, I am Buddhi, I have approached you as a messenger from (i.e. of) the great (elements). Listen to their words (i.e. message). The five-natured (elements) desire your eternal friendship. Form friendship (with them), O you highly intelligent one, and abandon (i.e. keep) Dhyāna far away."

Dhyāna (*Meditation said*):

36. O Ātman, you should not have their company. Merely by their contact there will be great grief (i.e. great grief will befall you).

37. How would you do your duty, when you are forsaken by Jñāna and me? So, you should not at all associate yourself with them.

38. O mighty one, they will make you live in the womb; there is no other go. Without Jñāna and me, you will certainly go to Ajñāna (i.e. Ignorance).

39. Thus speaking to that highly intelligent Ātman, Dhyāna ceased to speak. Then, Ātman, who was determined (to form friendship with the five elements), spoke to Buddhi, who had come to him:

40. "The illustrious Jñāna and Dhyāna are my virtuous ministers. It is not proper to go to them. So, O Buddhi, what shall I do (now)?"

41. Hearing thus (i.e. these words), the glorious Buddhi told in the vicinity of (i.e. to) them (i.e. the five elements) the full narration of Jñāna and Dhyāna (i.e. told everything that Jñāna and Dhyāna had said).

42-43. Then all the five (elements) went to Ātman (and said to him):) "We constantly desire your friendship only. O you lord of the worlds, since you are pure, we have approached you. Thinking for yourself only (i.e. independently of Jñāna and Dhyāna), please give us a reply."

Ātman said:

44. All you five have come; (and) you seek my friendship. Tell before (i.e. to) me your merit and power.

Bhūmi (the Earth) said:

45. My firmness rooted in the bones is the basis of all operations, is connected with skin and flesh, and with nails and the hair on the body.

46. O you very wise one, my strength is in the body. That magnanimous odour passing through the nose is my servant.

Ākāśa (Ether) said:

47-48. I, Ether, have come. Listen; I shall tell you about the lustre, of the nature of the highest Brahman; space is without and within; I live in a vacant place. My ministers are the two ears; they are set up for hearing.

Vāyu (Wind) said:

49. I remain in five forms,[1] and in this way I perform auspicious and inauspicious things. My minister, remaining on the habitation of the skin, resorts to the quality of touch.

Tejas (Fire) said:

50-54a. Always remaining in the body, I digest (articles of food). I manifest all matter and non-matter, without and within. I send forth semen, marrow, saliva, and also blood remaining in the skin and joints. I remain in the body. The two eyes are my ministers that cause the perception of matter. Thus before (i.e. to) you I have narrated my function. Everyday I well nourish the body with nectar. Such is my operation in the dear city of the body. Know[2] the tongue to be my minister who very much enjoys the tastes.

Nāsikā (Nose) said:

54b-56. I give great nourishment to the body with fragrance. Casting off bad odour, I manifest (good) odour over the body. O you illustrious one, united with Buddhi, and displayed by her existence, I remain steady in this body for the mission of my master. Know odour to be my quality which proceeds in two ways.

1. The five forms of Vāyu are: Prāṇa, Apāna, Vyāna, Udāna, Samāna.
2. Before this verse some such words as 'Āpaḥ ūcuḥ' are missing.

The two Ears said :

57-58. Remaining in our body (i.e. the body to which we belong), we hear words telling about what ought or ought not to be done, and also auspicious and inauspicious words, true and false words, pleasant and unpleasant words uttered by people. My (i.e. our) quality is sound, and there is no doubt that I (i.e. we) employ my (i.e. our) operation when the intellect would intensify me (i.e. us).

The Skin said:

59-62a. The five-formed wind is well-settled without and within the body. I feel the movement of these (five forms). I feel cold, hot, sun, rain, and throbbing of the wind. I feel every touch, every contact (with) phlegm etc. of men. My quality is touch alone. I am telling the truth. Thus I have told you about my function.

The two Eyes said :

62b-64a. O best one, when the Intellect urges, and not otherwise, we observe all proper and improper forms that exist in the world. We remain in the body, and form is our quality. Thus is the propriety of our function in the body, O you highly intelligent one.

The Tongue spoke:

64b-66a. O dear one, united with Buddhi, I spread the kinds of taste. I find out every (taste) like saline, sour, insipid or sweet. Always associated with this function, I remain (in the body). This Intellect is the leader of all the sense-organs.

66b-67a. O dear one, listen, thus these five sense-organs have come together; and they again and again narrated their respective functions.

67b-68. Then Intellect approached the very intelligent one and said to him: "When the body is without me, it perishes; not otherwise. Therefore, O you highly intelligent one (i.e. Ātman), carry on, after having resorted to flesh (i.e. body).

69-70a. Then Karma (Fate) came there and said this (i.e. these words) to Ātman: "O you very wise one, I am Karma, and have approached you. I send you along the path by which you go here (i.e. in the world)."

70b-72a. Having heard all that, Ātman said to them: "You are united with the five-natured ones and are indeed common to all. Why do you seek the friendship of the five-natured one? You may (please) tell before (i.e. to) me the entire reason."

The five-natured ones said:

72b-74a. Due to our contact the body is produced; O you of a high intelligence, you who follow a good vow, stay in that body. Due to your favour all of us (also) stay there. For this reason we always desire your friendship.

Ātman said:

74b-75a. O illustrious ones, let that, which is dear to you, be so. There is no doubt that I shall befriend you through affection.

75b-76a. The glorious and high-minded one, though warded off by the noble Jñāna and also by Dhyāna, sought their company.

76b-77a. Then the lord, being deluded by attachment and hatred, and associated with the five elements, became embodied.

77b-80a. When he (i.e. Ātman) goes to the womb (i.e. is conceived), he, fallen into the lubricious eddy, full of excrement and urine, along with them, with his body distressed, said to the five-natured ones. "O you five-natured ones, all of you listen to my words. Due to your contact, I, being deluded by great grief, have fallen into this lubricious, very terrible and fearful (eddy)."

The five-natured ones said :

80b-82a. O lord, remain there till the foetus is full (i.e. mature). Then, there is no doubt that, you will come out of it. You are our lord, settled in the region of the body. Thus you should rule; you will be enjoying pleasures.

82b-83. Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) them, Ātman, oppressed by grief, and desiring to go (away), became intent on running (away).

CHAPTER EIGHT

Account of the Soul

Kaśyapa said :

1. He, being afflicted day by day, became bewildered in the womb. The rightenous one, harassed by all kinds of suffering, was overcome with grief.

2. With his face turned down he remained in the womb. He was overcome with mental agonies and physical diseases; he was lamented over; he was senseless.

3a. He was full of great grief. Being (thus) tormented, he said to Jñāna:

Ātman said:

3b-4. O you very wise one, at that time I did not do what you told me (to do). In spite of being prevented by Dhyāna, I fell into the danger caused by delusion. Therefore, O you highly intelligent one, protect me from this very fearful stay in the womb.

Jñāna said :

5. O Ātman, you were prevented by me; but you did not do what I told (you). You were put in this calamity of (remaining in) the womb by the very cruel five-natured ones. Now go to Dhyāna; you will obtain pleasure from him (in it). There is no doubt that you will be free from the residence in the womb.

6-8a. Understanding (i.e. hearing) those words—the fact—from (i.e. spoken by) Jñāna, he, having called Dhyāna, said (to him): "Please listen to my words. O Dhyāna, I have sought your refuge. (Please) protect me always."

8b. "Let it be so, O you very wise one." Thus Dhyāna spoke to that highly intelligent one (i.e. Ātman).

9. Hearing these words, Ātman then approached Dhyāna. With Dhyāna, and free from delusion, he lived in the womb.

10-11. When Ātman went to Dhyāna, he forgot the fear caused by (remaining in) the womb. The Ātman accompanied by the two (i.e. Jñāna and Dhyāna) and dissociated from delusion (remained) thinking about his own happiness only. "As soon as

I go out of this (womb) I shall give up the body formed by the five-natured ones."

12-19. The lord, living in the womb, always thought like this. O you of a beautiful face, at the time of the delivery of the one related to Prajāpati the foetus is shaken by wind, and also by the strong breath of life. The vulva expands (only) twenty-four fingers; the foetus is (of the size of) twentyfive fingers; therefore he is troubled. O dear one, thus being troubled by swoon, he falls, with Jñāna and Dhyāna, on the ground, . He is separated from it by the divine wind related to Prajāpati. Merely by the touch of the ground, Jñāna and Dhyāna are forgotten. Ātman, confounded in the bondage of the worldly existence, remains there through love (for it). Filled with virtues and vices, and connected with great delusion, he everyday desires everything like eatables and drinks. Ātman thus being nourished with the five-natured ones is covered over with the sense-organs and all sinful objects of senses. O respectable lady, enticed by his relatives like his wife and others, day by day he becomes afflicted and agitated.

20-21a. This lord, Ātman, confounded by great delusion, (and thus) caught in the net of delusion, and being bound, as a fish is bound in a net by a fisherman, is unable to move.

21b-23. He is bound with strong bonds of the nets of infatuation. Deprived of Jñāna and Vijñāna, and struck by attachment and hatred, he is thus pervaded by the pervading universe. Being tormented by desire, and also by anger and bound by Prakṛti (i.e. the natural disposition) by means of his deeds, he became (i.e. becomes) greatly confounded.

Sūta said:

24-25. When Ātman was thus deluded and was occupied with all the wicked ones like greed, attachment, he was bound by the delusion of the form of the worldly existence like: 'This is (my) wife; this is (my) son; this is (my) friend; this is (my) house.'

26. He is then distressed by griefs like bereavement of the

son etc., and is also consumed by old age, physical diseases and mental agonies also.

27. Thus Ātman is tormented by very fearful misery and delusion; and is frustrated by pride, humiliation and many miseries.

28. O respectable lady, he is, in the same way, troubled by old age in various ways. Constantly lamented over and senseless he thinks of misery (only).

29. At night he sees dreams, and by day he is without vitality. O respectable lady, similarly, day by day, he is full of the imperfections of the limbs.

30. When he was wandering in the mundane existence, he saw Vairāgya (i.e. detachment), that was fearless, friendless, very tranquil and contented.

31-32. Then Ātman spoke to him, that was free from desire and anger: "Who are you (remaining) with a naked form? How is it that you are not ashamed of your friends? Moving in the place where there are groups (of the elements), women, old persons, young women and mothers, you, who are uncovered, are not afraid (i.e. are not ashamed)."

Vītarāga said :

33-34. Who would be seen naked here? I am never naked. Even though you are well-dressed, you are very much bound. O divine one, I am never naked. You who live under the sway of the objects of senses and are without (i.e. do not care for) any bounds of morality appear to be naked.

Ātman said:

35. O you of a good vow, tell me in detail what the bounds of morality are, if you know them definitely.

36-37a. The very wise, very intelligent Vītarāga said to him: "The mind resorts to great firmness in (times of) happiness and unhappiness. And (when) it is troubled by respective objects, it should be given up to them.

37b-38. I shall now explain to you the sense of shame, which fully enters the mind. I have nothing to do today; I am removed

from my position, I am naked—(when thus) one is absorbed in remorse, that is said to be the sense of shame.

39. Of whom should one be ashamed? There is never a second. The divine Puruṣa (Person) is just one. What would he destroy and of whom?

40-42. Now I shall explain to you the groups which you mentioned. As a potter would put a lump of clay on the wheel, and then would cause it to revolve with a string, and would, with a firm mind, manifest (i.e. fashion) them (i.e. the pots) as he desires, in the same way—and in no other way—the creator fashions various forms. Later, for one reason or another, they perish.

43. One should be ashamed of the eternal groups (of the elements) that always remain, for they do not rest (i.e. depend) on the earth.

44. They are: Ether, Wind, Fire, Earth and Water as the fifth. These groups, that are present everywhere, shine.

45. These five well-settled in the regions of the bodies of beings, are present everywhere. (Then) of whom should one be ashamed?

46-47a. O dear one, I shall now explain to you the nature of women. As in thousands of pots with (i.e. containing) water the one (and only) moon shines (i.e. is reflected), similarly you shine everywhere.

47b-54a. You, who are very magnanimous, and who, remain in thousands of beings, and in the mobile and the immobile, are deluded. Through the door (i.e. opening) of the vulva, which is sinful and full of illusion and delusion, and also through the breasts and buttocks and age, you shine. Here also is seen the increase in (the shape of) the heart and flesh. For the fall of the people the form of delusion is manifested. There is no woman that is mentioned by you. The creator ever fashions the creation for his diversion. The soul of the man like that of a woman remains everywhere. Those that are free from breasts (i.e. from sexual desire) are always liberated. Man is called Puruṣa (i.e. the soul) and woman is said to be Prakṛti (i.e. nature, original source of the material world). She sports with him and is never free. You, united with Prakṛti, are seen among Puruṣas

(i.e. men). Who causes shame (and) to whom? Knowing thus go happily.

54b-56. O beautiful lady, I shall explain to you the old woman who is always old. The skin on her body, O lady of a beautiful face, is worn out. She is full of white and grey Hair. She is feeble, miserable and is covered over with folds. Such a woman would not be old; but she is called old.

57-58a. I have narrated her characteristics. Now I shall tell (the characteristics of) a young woman. She, living near the soul, always grows richer in knowledge. She is called Sumati (i.e. good intention), and is both old and young. The woman is always settled in puruṣas (i.e. souls). One should be ashamed of her. I shall also tell (you something) else.

58b-62a. I shall explain to you the mother, whom you mentioned. She is Cetanā (i.e. consciousness) always living in the bodies of beings. She gives the highest knowledge, and (therefore) she is called Prajñā (i.e. discernment). Prajñā is called mother as she lives in all the worlds for the protection, nourishment and well-fare of beings. That one who is described as Sumati, is called mātā (i.e. mother).

62b-63. All the forms always leading to the gates of the mundane existence are these mothers. They cause great misery. I have explained to you the nature of the mother. What else should I tell you?"

Ātman said :

64. Who are you, that have come here, and are removing my tormentation? (Please) explain to me in detail your own nature.

Vītarāga said :

65-67a. Well-being to you; I am Vītarāga, from whom all desires, being frustrated, turn away; whom these vile deeds do not see due to their wickedness—this has no alternative; whom hope never approaches; due to whose fear anger, greed and infatuation have perished; and Viveka (i.e. discrimination) is my brother.

Ātman said :

67b-68a. Of what nature is this your brother named Viveka? Tell me his—your brother's characteristics and also of your own.

Vītarāga said :

68b-70a. I shall not narrate before (i.e. to) you his characteristics and form. O glorious one, I shall (just) call that brother (himself). O Viveka, my brother, listen to our speech (i.e. words). O you very glorious one, O you very intelligent one, (please) come out of affection for me.

Kaśyapa said :

70b-76. He, omniscient, omnipresent, pervading, devoted entirely to truth, the enemy of all errors, and lover of knowledge came (there) with his two wives, Śānti (Tranquility) and Kṣamā (Forbearance). Dhāraṇā (Retentive memory) and Dhī (understanding) are the two daughters of the same magnanimous one (Viveka). Yoga (Abstract meditation) in his eldest son, and Mokṣa (salvation) is his great preceptor. That Viveka, who is spotless, ego-less, desire-less, having no possession, with his mind pleased at all times, free from the pairs of opposites (like pleasure and pain) and hihgly intelligent one, came (there) adorned with all jewels. That Viveka, whose ministers were the very glorious and highly intelligent Dharma (Piety) and Satya (Truth) came (there), accompanied by Kṣamā and Śānti. He said to Vītrarāga: "Invited (by you) I have come. So, O brother, tell before (i.e. to) me the full reason resorting to (i.e. for) which you have invited me."

Vītarāga said :

77-79. This man, who is before (us) is restrained by great nooses, is deluded by Moha's arrows, and also by the bonds of the worldly existence. He pervades everything, and is the master of all, and also of me. He is seized by the five elements; and is bereft of Jñāna and Dhyāna. You who know facts should ask this Ātman.

Hearing the words of Vītarāga, Viveka spoke these words:

Viveka said :

80. O lord of the universe, you are carrying on happily, What pleasure did you yourself enjoy after coming to the worldly existence?

Ātman said :

81-86. O you highly intelligent one, I, void of knowledge, always experienced the great, unbearable and terrible grief of the residence in the womb. Being deprived of knowledge while in the body, I was born in many ways. When I was in childhood, O lord, I did undeserving deeds. As a youth I sported, and enjoyed my wife in many ways. When I reached old age I was tormented by the grief of (i.e. the bereavement of my) son etc. Due to the separation from my wife etc. I was burnt day and night. Everyday I was tormented by miseries of many kinds. O you highly intelligent one, I am not at all having any pleasure by day or at night. O you very intelligent one, what do (i.e. should) I, very much tormented by agonies, do (now)? Just tell me the means by which I shall get happiness. (Please) make me free from this great bond—this heap of the noose of the mundane existence.

Viveka said :

87-93. O you lord of the world, you are pure, you are free from the pairs (like pleasure and pain), and are free from sins. Go to this glorious Vītarāga, who gives happiness, whom you have undoubtedly seen naked and without any formality. He shows (the way to) happiness and destroys all distress.

Hearing thus (i.e. these words), the pure soul again went to Vītarāga. The melancholy one, sighing deeply, said to him (i.e. to Vītarāga): "(Please) listen to my words. Show me that way by (i.e. following) which I shall get happiness." "O very intelligent one, let it be so. I shall do as you tell me. Again go to Viveka; you have told me a pleasant news. He (i.e. Viveka) only will tell you the way to happiness." The lord, (thus) sent by virtuous Vītarāga, went (to Viveka); and spoke to the glorious, pure and best Viveka: "(Please), show me (the way to) happi-

ness. Sent by Vītarāga, I have sought your refuge. Protect me from the frightful worldly existence."

Viveka said :

94a. O you very wise one, go to Jñāna; he will explain everything to you.

94b-95. Ātman, thus told, went to the place where Jñāna stayed. (He said to Jñāna): "O Jñāna of great lustre and illumining all objects, I have sought your refuge; show me the way to happiness."

Jñāna said :

96-97. O lord of the worlds, I am your servant. O you of a good vow, you do not know (i.e. you have not recognised) me. Formerly Dhyāna and I had repeatedly warded you off. Due to your contact with the five-natured ones (i.e. the elements), you have met with a calamity. O you highly intelligent one, go to Dhyāna, he will grant you happiness.

98-105. Sent by Jñāna, Ātman remained after having resorted to Dhyāna. (He said to Dhyāna): "O Dhyāna, show me the happiness that is perfectly accomplished. Thus protect me who have sought your shelter." Dhyāna having heard these words spoken to him by Ātman, was delighted, and again said to that Ātman: "O dear one, well-determined in (doing) all deeds, by you and by Vītarāga and Viveka, I am never to be forsaken. Be endowed with Dhyāna, and observe yourself, by being self-possessed, firm, free from fear and doubt. You will go to (i.e. obtain) salvation by burning (i.e. destroying) your blemishes, as a lamp in a place sheltered from wind is firm and emits soot. Always remain in a secluded place; remain without food (or) with limited food. Be without the pairs of opposites (like pleasure and pain), without words, and firmly remaining on your seat. Reflecting, with a firm mind, on your self only you will reach that highest place of Viṣṇu, (which is also) my place."

CHAPTER NINE

Instructions to Diti

Kaśyapa said :

1-2. The intelligent Ātman, thus addressed by Dhyāna and others, desiring to give up the product of the five-natured ones, and finding out motives, abandoning his aimless body, which he did not notice when it fell down, went to them.

3. There is no connection between life and body that were brought up together. For what reason is there a relation with wealth, sons or wife?

4-13a. O you very dear one, realising thus, be calm; do not be weak-minded. He alone is the highest Brahman; he alone is eternal. This Ātman lives in demons and gods in his own nature. He is Brahmā; he is Rudra; he is the eternal Viṣṇu. He creates all things; he protects the beings. This (Ātman) Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), the pious one and of the nature of virtue withdraws (all). O you very dear one, he has created gods and demons. Gods are liberated due to their piety (while) your sons are wanting in piety. This virtue is Viṣṇu's body, preserved by all gods. O respectable lady, one (i.e. a man) should think about proper conduct and follow proper conduct only. The meritorious Viṣṇu always favours him. Gods always lived with piety, truth and penances. Those, with whom Viṣṇu is pleased, have practised virtue here (i.e. in this world). This proper conduct is the body of Viṣṇu and truth is his heart. Viṣṇu is pleased with him who always practises them. He, who would defile truth and piety would always have sin. The very powerful Viṣṇu would be angry with him and would destroy him. Viṣṇu's devotees, abiding by truth and penance practised piety. The virtuous one is pleased with them and protects them thus.

13b-14. Your sons, as well as the sons of Danu and Siṁhikā, who were wicked-hearted, and who lived by (i.e. committed) impiety and sins, were killed in battle by Viṣṇu, having the disc in his hand.

15-17. That Ātman whom I formerly described before (i.e. to) you only, is Viṣṇu (himself); there is no doubt about it. He is meritorious and is the guardian of all. He who lived comfortably

in the bodies of the demons, resorted to sin only. He, O respectable lady, the highly intelligent one, became angry, and killed the demons. Being within and without he struck down your sons. O respectable lady, they were struck down by him who had created them.

18-19a. You should not have any infatuation for them. Listen (to my words). He who lives sinfully, dies (i.e. perishes). Therefore, give up infatuation, and always practise piety.

Diti said :

19b-20. Let it be so, O glorious one; I shall do as you have told me.

She, who was afflicted, and who was addressed by the sage, gave up her sorrow, after having said these words.

CHAPTER TEN

The Practice of Penance by Demons

The sages said :

1-2. O you very intelligent one, what effort did all the demons, who were accompanied by Hiraṇyakaśipu and had fled from the battle, do? Tell us in detail their excellent account. O brāhmaṇa, we all now desire to hear it from you.

Sūta said :

3. All the demons who had fled from the battle, who had become powerless, prideless and distressed with grief, went to their father.

4-5a. Having devoutly saluted (their father) Kaśyapa, they then said to him:

The demons said :

O best brāhmaṇa, we demons are born from your semen, so also are gods.

5b-9. All we demons are strong, powerful and brave; we also are knowers of expedients; we are very courageous and full of exertion. We are many, and the gods are few. How is it that they are victorious and we, endowed with power and lustre, have fled from the great battle? What is the reason for that, O father? Each one of the demons has the strength of a thousand intoxicated elephants. The gods do not have (strength) like that; and yet in the great war victory is had by the gods. So (please) tell (the reason for) all this. Please remove (our) doubt.

Kaśyapa said :

10-12a. O all my sons, listen to the reason for the victory (of the gods)—due to which the gods became victorious in the battle. The father is the giver of the semen (i.e. the seed); and the mother is always the soil. She conceives, protects and nourishes (her son). What would a father do in the case of a son whose intentions are fearful?

12b-18. Here (the son's) fate is (i.e. his deeds are) important (i.e. responsible). This is what I think. Association with Karma is due to two things: sin and merit. Proper conduct can be practised by resorting to truth only. Truth endowed with penance and meditation leads to emancipation, O (my) sons. There is no doubt about this that (even) with power, (good) attendants and nobility of birth, sin always leads to a fall, O (my) sons. All that power (etc.) of him who is without religious merit is impaired. O (my) good sons, there are tall and dense trees on the mountains and inaccessible places, (but) by the force of the wind they fall down along with their roots. Similarly those who are without truth and piety go to Yama's abode. O (my) good sons, this is a common rule (applicable) to (all) beings. You have abandoned the truth associated with piety, due to which a being is emancipated here (i.e. in this) and the next world.

19-24. O (my) sons, you, who were destitute of truth, have resorted to impiety. Fallen from truth, piety and penance, you have fallen into the ocean of grief; and (i.e. on the other hand) the gods who are endowed with truth and virtue, and with penance, tranquility and restraint, have a great religious merit and are sinless. Victory is seen there where there are truth, piety, penance, religious merit and Viṣṇu Hṛṣīkeśa. Eternal Vāsudeva

i.e. Viṣṇu helps them (only). Therefore, gods endowed with truth and piety become victorious with (Viṣṇu as their) helper and also due to power and valour. O (my) sons, you are destitute of penance and truth. Those who are conversant with (laws of) morality, know that that man who has Viṣṇu as his helper, and who has penance and power is alone seen to get victory.

25. You are without piety and also deprived of penance and truth, and you had also formerly secured Indra's position by force.

26. O (my) very intelligent sons, Indra's position cannot be obtained without penance, piety and glory (and merely) with qualities of power and pride.

27-28. O sons, those getting Indra's position (without penance, piety etc.) fall from it. Therefore, O (my) sons, you (should) together practise penance without quarrel and endowed with knowledge and meditation. You should never entertain enmity with Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu).

29. O (my) sons, when you will be blessed like this; then (only) you will obtain highest success; there is no doubt about this.

30-31. Thus told by the noble Kaśyapa, the very vigorous demons, having listened to the words of their father, devoutly saluted Kaśyapa and rising hastily, gathered together and held thorough consultation among themselves.

32-34. Then king Hiraṇyakaśipu said to the demons: "We shall (now) practise penance difficult to practise (but) giving everything." At that time Hiraṇyākṣa said : "I shall practise terrible penance. Then with (my) power I shall seize (all) the three worlds. There is no doubt about this. Having vanquished in battle that wicked-hearted Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu) and having killed all gods, I shall reach Indra's position."

Bali said :

35. O lords—the sons of Diti—it is not proper for you to act like this. That enmity which you have with Viṣṇu, is the cause of destruction.

36. Men obtain happiness by propitiating that Hṛṣīkeśa (i.e. Viṣṇu) with charity, religious merit, penance, and performance of sacrifices.

Hiraṇyakaśipu said :

37-38. Like this (i.e. as advised by Bali) I shall never propitiate Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu). The wise ones take it to be excelling death if one, by giving up one's nature, serves one's enemy. Neither I nor other demons will serve Viṣṇu.

39-43. Then Bali again said to that magnanimous grandfather (of him) : "This is what is observed in the codes of laws by sages knowing truth—an advice full of statesmanship—especially regarding an enemy. Knowing oneself to be inferior, and the enemy to be powerful one should go near the enemy and wait for the time (i.e. opportunity) for victory. Darkness always stays by resorting to the shadow of a lamp. Darkness knowing the oiliness of the wick of the lamp and the very powerful light, goes to it and increases. Similarly remaining screened, and showing love actually, O demons, you should form friendship with gods following piety.

44. O prudent king of kings, formerly sage Kaśyapa has given good advice; do your deeds in accordance with it."

45. Having heard those words of (i.e. uttered by) him, the powerful demon said : "O grandson, I shall not humiliate myself like this."

46-48a. Other kinsmen also said to him who was proficient in statesmanship : "What Bali said is meritorious and dear to the gods; what he said would increase Indra's pride and is fearful to the demons. All of us will just practise excellent penance. Having vanquished the gods with penance, we shall forcibly (regain) our position."

48b-50. Having thus conversed and having repudiated Bali at that time, the great demons entertaining great enmity with Viṣṇu in their heart, practised penance in mountaneous inaccessible places and (mountain-) peaks. Thus the demons had abandoned attachment, were well-determined, were free from desire and anger, remained without food and had overcome fatigue.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Story of Suvrata

The sages said :

1. You, the omniscient one, have narrated (to us the account of) the war between (the gods and) the demons. Now we desire to hear (the account) of the noble Suvrata.

2. Of whom was he—the very intelligent one—the son? In whose family was he born? What (kind of) penance did the brāhmaṇa have (i.e. practise)? How did he propitiate Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu)?

Sūta said :

3-4. O brāhmaṇas, I shall tell you the account of the noble Suvrata as I had heard it due to the power of my intelligence. I shall tell you, with Viṣṇu's favour, the divine, purifying account bringing the Viṣṇuite merit (to the narrator and the listener).

5-7. O illustrious ones, in the former Kalpa, the best brāhmaṇa, named Somaśarman was born in Kauśika's family at an excellent sacred place which removed sins and which was very meritorious, named Vāmana, on the bank of Revā. Being sonless and full of great grief, he was always oppressed by painful poverty. Day and night he thought about the means (to have) a son and wealth also.

8-12. Once his dear wife, Sumanā by name, and of a good vow, saw her husband full of worry and with his face hung down. The devout (woman), seeing her husband (like that) said to him: "Your mind is overpowered by innumerable worries. You are confounded by infatuation. O you very intelligent one, give up your worry (i.e. stop worrying). Tell me (about) your worry. Be composed and happy. There is no (other) distress like worry which parches up the body. He who lives by giving up his worries, enjoys happily. O Brāhmaṇa, tell me the cause of your worry." Hearing the words of his beloved (wife) Somaśarman said to her :

Somaśarman said :

13. Thoughts (are) due to desire, O good lady; and thinking is the cause of grief. I shall tell you all that. Having heard it, understand it accurately.

14. O you of a good vow, I do not know due to which sin I am poor and sonless. This is the cause of my grief.

Sumanā said :

15-16. Listen. What I say will remove all doubts; the advice (should be such as) shows the correct knowledge. Greed is the seed of sin, and delusion is its root. Falsehood is its trunk, and deceit is its well-expanded branch.

17-22. Religious hypocrisy and crookedness are its leaves; it is always flowered with wicked intellect. Deception is its fragrance, and ignorance is its fruit. The sinful cruel birds like dishonesty, heresy, theft, envy have resorted to the branch of deceit of the tree of delusion. Its good fruit is ignorance; and the juice of the fruit is unrighteousness. Nourished by the water of thirst (i.e. desire) faithlessness is its exudation, O dear one. The good juice of it viz. impiety is (felt to be) superior and becomes sweet, and the tree of greed has fruits of such a type only. That man who is happy after resorting to its shadow, who everyday eats its very ripe fruits, and who is nourished by the juice of fruits i.e. impiety, becomes pleased and proceeds towards a fall.

23-27. Therefore giving up worrying a man should not have greed. He should not at all worry about wealth, sons and wife. Even if he is a learned person he goes along the path of fools, O dear one (if he worries). Everyday a fool thinks: 'How can I get wealth? How can I get a good wife? How can I have sons?' Being deluded, he thinks like this day and night. (Just) for a moment he (is deluded and) finds great pleasure while worrying; again he comes to his senses and is oppressed by great grief. O brāhmaṇa, give up worry and delusion and act. O you highly intelligent one, nobody has (any) connection with anyone (else) in the worldly existence.

28. Friends, relatives, sons, fathers and mothers with servants, and wives come to have a (chance) relation with a man.

Somaśarman said :

29. In the same way, O good lady, tell (me) in detail what kind of relation is there, by which wealth, sons and other relatives become related.

Sumanā said :

30. Some are relations through debt; some are those who had taken away (other's) wealth; some are helpful; others are indifferent.

31-35. Sons, friends or wives are born (and are) of (these) four kinds. So also wife, father, mother, servants, relatives and friends are born on the earth in accordance with their connection with a person. The person, whose deposit was taken away by another person becomes the latter's virtuous and handsome son on the earth—(is born) in the house of him who has taken away his deposit; there is no doubt about this; because he had left after giving him terrible grief by taking away his deposit. O glorious one, the owner of the deposit becomes the good son of him who had taken away his deposit; he is virtuous, handsome, and is endowed with all good characteristics. Being (born) as his son, he everyday shows devotion to him.

36-38. He speaks sweetly, is attractive and healthy, and shows great love for him; producing excellent love in him by being born as his son and by means of his great qualities, he gives him the same terrible fatal grief by taking away his wealth as he had given him by taking away his deposit in a former existence. So also being short-lived, he dies (a premature death).

39-40a. Thus again and again he is born, gives grief, and dies. When he (i.e. the father) laments, 'Oh my son !' he (i.e. the son) just laughs. So who is whose son and who is the father?

40b-42. (The son says:) "The deposit that was helpful to me was taken away by him. Even by taking away the wealth my life did not formerly depart, even due to great, unbearable grief. Therefore, giving him grief and taking away excellent wealth I shall today go. Whose son am I, who am like this?

43. He is not my father, nor was he the son of anyone. To this wicked one only I have given the state of a goblin."

44-45. Speaking like this, he repeatedly laughs, and goes. Giving him very terrible grief, he goes along this way. O dear one, thus (persons) become the sons of them who had taken away their deposits. Everywhere in the mundane existence, (fathers) full of great grief are seen.

46. I shall later explain to you the son connected (with the father) through debt.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Dialogue between Somaśarman and Sumanā

Sumanā said :

1-3. (Now) hereafter I shall describe to you the son who is related through debt. He, from whom a man takes a loan dies—i.e. the creditor, being (i.e. is born as) the son or the brother or the father, or might be (born as) a friend (and) is always very cruel, O dear one. The cruel one of a rough form, does not notice the virtue (in others), and always utters harsh words among his relatives.

4-7. He always eats sweets and desired articles (of food) and enjoys pleasures. He is ever engaged in gambling and has a desire to steal. He forcibly enjoys the wealth which is in the house (i.e. wealth of the family) and gets angry if prevented (from doing so). Everyday he abuses his father and mother. He is a thief, causes fear and talks too much and harshly. Thus enjoying that wealth (of the family etc.) he lives happily. Being very cruel he makes money by means of birth-rites in childhood, and in many ways through various kinds of marriages.

8-10. Thus wealth is obtained by him and he gives it in this way also. (He thinks:) 'The house, field etc. are mine. There is no doubt about it.' Everyday he hits his father and mother with pestles by giving them many very fearful strokes. When his father or mother is dead, he who is very cruel becomes affectionless and rough. There is no doubt about it.

11. He never performs the Śrāddha-rites and never gives gifts. Sons of this type are born on the earth.

12-16a. O best of brāhmaṇas, I shall explain to you a hostile son. When he reaches childhood, he always behaves like an enemy (with his parents). Even while playing he would beat his father and mother; and after repeatedly beating them he laughs and departs. Again being fearful, he comes to his father and mother; and after repeatedly beating them he laughs and departs. Again being fearful, he comes to his father and mother. He is always angry; and again and again abuses (them). Thus he is always engaged in hostile acts. Having again beaten his father, and also his mother, the wicked one departs as a result of the former enmity.

16b-21. Now hereafter I shall describe the son from whom desired things can be obtained. As soon as he is born he does dear things to (i.e. pleases) his parents, and (delights them) by indulgence and sports in childhood; and immediately after he attains youth he does things liked by his mother and father. With devotion he pleases and delights them by means of affe-ctionate words and conversation dear to them. When he comes to know about the demise of his parent, he weeps through affection (for the parent). Extremely grieved, he performs all rites like Śrāddha and offering piṇḍas. He also offers them maintenance. Conforming to (the repayment of) the three debts, he always feeds them. O you very intelligent one, O my dear husband, being their son he returns in this manner whatever would be (i.e. is) obtained from them.

22-24a. O dear one, now I shall describe to you (the son called) indifferent. He does not give and now receives; he is neither angry, nor pleased. O best of brāhmaṇas, an indifferent (son) does not give by making a sacrifice. I have told you every-thing—i.e. this mode of existence (of various types) of sons.

24b-35a. Like the son are the wife, the father, the mother and the kinsmen; so also are said to be the others (like) the servants, beasts and horses; so also elephants, buffaloes and attendants. All these are connected through debt. We have for that reason not taken a debt from anyone; so also in the former existence we have not made any deposit with anyone. O dear husband, we are not indebted to anyone. (Please) listen. We

have no hostility with anyone which is entertained in a previous existence. O my husband, O best brāhmaṇa, we have not given up anything. Realising this, be calm and give up (your) worry causing unhappiness. Whose are the sons, or whose is the dear wife? Whose are the relatives and friends? You have never snatched (anything) from anyone and have given nothing to anyone. Then how can wealth come to us? O my husband, do not have any doubt. O best brāhmaṇa, whatever wealth is to be obtained, it easily comes to the hand (of a person). A man preserves wealth with great care; but the departing one (i.e. the one that dies) departs (all alone); but the wealth remains just there. Realising this, give up your worry which is useless and be calm. Whose are the sons? Whose is the dear wife? Whose are the relatives and friends? O best brāhmaṇa, in this mundane existence, nobody belongs to none (else), since there is no connection (between the two). Men of wicked hearts and deluded with great infatuation (say:) 'This is my house; this is my son; the women are mine only.' O dear husband, this bond of the mundane existence is seen to be unreal.

35b-36a. Thus advised by his dear wife, the respectable lady, he again spoke to his dear wife Sumanā, who expounded knowledge.

Somaśarman said :

36b-38a. O good lady, you have spoken the truth, which has removed all (my) doubt. Still good men, really wise men become fascinated (with all these). O dear one, as I am anxious to have a son, I am also anxious to have wealth. I shall produce (i.e. have) a son by this or that means.

Sumanā said :

38b-43a. A man conquers the worlds with a son; a son emancipates the family. Due to a good son alone the father and the mother are (i.e. proved to be) living beings. One learned son is most precious. What is the use of having many worthless sons? The first (i.e. the good) one emancipates the family, (while) the others cause tormentation. I have previously only told (you) that others are (just) relations. Due to religious merit (only) a son is obtained; (similarly) due to religious merit (birth in a good)

family is obtained. A good embryo is obtained by religious merit; therefore practise religious merit. One that is born gets death (i.e. is sure to die); and one that dies gets birth. Due to meritorious acts a good birth (i.e. birth in a good family) is obtained, so also is obtained (peaceful) death; and O dear husband, he obtains happiness and wealth due to meritorious deeds.

Somaśarman said :

43b-44a. O dear one, tell me about the practice of good deeds, and also about the (various) existences. Of what nature is a man of meritorious deeds? (i.e. What are the characteristics of the man of meritorious deeds?) O good lady, tell (me) the characteristics of religious merit.

Sumanā said :

44b-45. I shall first explain to you (what) merit (is), as I have heard about it; and also (I shall explain to you) how a man or a woman behaves everyday, and how by means of meritorious deeds he or she obtains fame, dear sons and wealth.

46a. O dear husband, I shall tell you all the characteristics of merit.

46b-48. One should practise virtue which has these ten components viz. celibacy, truthfulness, performance of five sacrifices,[1] charity, restraint, forbearance, purity, harmlessness, good prowess and non-stealing, O dear one. Complete merit is produced as satisfaction (is produced) in the belly by mouthfuls (of food after they are swallowed).

49-50a. A righteous person creates Dharma by means of three kinds of acts. Dharma, with his heart pleased leads him to religious merit only. The wise one gets whatever he desires (even though it is) difficult to obtain.

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1. Pañcamakha—The five daily sacrifices or acts of piety to be performed by a householder: (1) Brahmayajña i.e. teaching; (2) Pitṛyajña i.e. offering oblations to the manes; (3) Devayajña i.e. performing sacrificial rites; (4) Bhūtayajña i.e. an offering to all created beings; and (5) Nṛyajña i.e. honouring guests.

Somaśarman said :

50b. O you beautiful lady, what kind of form does Dharma have? What are the parts of his (body)? O my dear wife, kindly tell (it) to me; strong desire (to hear it) is produced (in me).

Sumanā said :

51-60. O best brāhmaṇa, in this world none has seen the form of Dharma. He, of a true nature and with his course seen by none, is not seen (even) by gods and demons. The brāhmaṇa Dattātreya, Anasūyā's son and born in Atri's family has always seen that great Dharma. The two noble ones (i.e. Dattātreya and Durvāsas) practising excellent penances, behaving righteously, shining with a more praiseworthy form than that of (even) Indra due to penance and prowess, remained for ten thousand years in a forest; the two of a charming appearance ate (i.e. lived on) wind or went without food. For ten thousand years they practised penance. Merit was observed in them who practised penance. O best brāhmaṇa, they both performed the (vow of) five fires till (i.e. during) that period (of ten thousand years). They practised it for all the three times and (during that period) did not eat food. Dattātreya and the sage (Durvāsas) remained in water during that period. The best sage Durvāsas was tormented by penance. The best sage got angry with Dharma. O noble one, when the best sage was (thus) angry, the intelligent Dharma came there in his own form along with Celibacy etc. and Austerities.

61-68. Truth in the form of a brāhmaṇa, also Celibacy, similarly Penance in the form of an excellent brāhmaṇa, and Restraint as an intelligent excellent brāhmaṇa, so also Control, and Charity in the form of a brāhmaṇa maintaining the sacred fire and offering oblations to it, came to (Durvāsas), the son of Atri. O best brāhmaṇa, all these having female forms, viz. Forbearance, Tranquility, Shame, Harmlessness, and Imagination, arrived there. So also Intellect, Wisdom, Faith, Retentive Faculty, Good Act, Tranquility, all the five Sacrifices, the holy Vedas with their limbs (i.e. the Vedāṅgas), were ready. The Consecration of Fire, the holy Horse-sacrifices and others, endowed with good forms and handsomeness, adorned with all (kinds of) ornaments, wearing divine flowers and garments, besmeared with

divine sandal, endowed with crowns and earrings and adorned with divine ornaments, bright and handsome, filled with lustrous flames (came there). Thus Dharma, accompanied by his retinue came there where the angry Durvāsas remained like death.

Dharma said :

69-70. O brāhmaṇa, why are you angry? You are endowed with penance. There is no doubt that anger would destroy virtue and penance. Anger destroys everything; therefore one should avoid anger. O best brāhmaṇa, be at ease; the fruit of penance is excellent.

Durvāsas said :

71-72a. Who are you that have come with these best brāhmaṇas? Seven beautiful and well-adorned women are standing (by you). O you highly intelligent one, tell me in detail (as to who you are etc.).

Dharma said :

72b-73. See, in front of you has come this Brahmacarya (i.e. Celibacy), in the form of a brāhmaṇa, endowed with all lustre, well-pleased, having a staff in his hand and holding a water-pot.

74-76. O best brāhmaṇa, see this other bright one viz. Satya (i.e. Truth), tawny (in complexion) and having reddish-brown eyes. Similarly, O you pious one, see this Tapas (i.e. Penance), lustrous like all gods, the one that you practised and resorting to all gods; it has come into your vicinity.

77-78. Similarly Dama (i.e. Self-restraint), that is lustrous and intent on being kind to all beings, and that always nourishes, has come.

79-80. O best brāhmaṇa, Niyama (i.e. Control) has come to you. He is wearing matted hair, is rough, tawny, very sharp, and a great master. With a sword in his hand, he is the destroyer of sins. He is tranquil, of a great merit, and always endowed with rites. Here in your vicinity (i.e. to you) has come Śauca, the brāhmaṇa, who is free, very bright, resembling crystal, holding a pitcher of water and a twig used as a toothbrush.

81. This Śuśrūṣā (i.e. Service), extremely chaste and very noble, adorned with the ornaments of truth, with her body charming with every ornament, has come.

82-86. O best brāhmaṇa, this Kṣamā (i.e. Forbearance), extremely wise, of a pleasing body, fair (in complexion), of a smiling face, with a lotus in her hand, a foster-mother, lotus-eyed, extremely beautiful, and endowed with divine ornaments has arrived. (This) Śānti (i.e. Tranquility) extremely peaceful, famous, endowed with many auspicious things, looking charming due to many divine jewels, adorned with divine ornaments, engaged in obliging others, full of many truths, of a limited speech, always incomparable, pleased, and with Kṣamā, adorned with all ornaments, having a lotus as her seat, beautiful, of a dark complexion, successful and noble, has come to you, O you highly intelligent one.

87-89a. This noble Ahiṁsā (i.e. Harmlessness) has come to you. Her complexion is like heated (i.e. bright) gold; she is looking graceful with red garments; she is well-pleased; she has a good counsel; and she is not looking here and there.

89b-94. See, O noble one, see, this Śraddhā, full of knowledge, of pious hands, devout, endowed with beauty due to pearls, spotless, and smiling charmingly, has come. O you very wise one, full of much intelligence and much knowledge, with her form strongly attached to good pleasures, well-settled, charming and auspicious, endowed with all desirable meditation, the victorious mother of the worlds, endowed with beauty on account of all ornaments, having plump buttocks and breasts, of a fair complexion, adorned with flowers and garments, is standing by you only. O you noble one, this Prajñā (i.e. Intellect) resembling a swan and the moon, having put on a pearl-necklace, adorned with all ornaments, well-pleased, high-minded, covered with a white garment, having a lotus as her couch, having books in her hands, always shining as she is seated on a lotus, has come to a fortunate person (i.e. to you).

95-98. O best brāhmaṇa, this Dayā (i.e. Pity) with her complexion like lac juice, always well-pleased, wearing a garland made of yellow flowers, having ornaments like necklaces and armlets, endowed with rings and bracelets, adorned with ear-rings has come near you. The respectable lady always shines with

a yellow garment. She is (simply) matchless in helping and nourishing the three worlds. She, whose character is always glorified has come.

99. This old, pious one is the wife of Thought, O you highly intelligent one. O best brāhmaṇa, she is my mother. O you of a good vow, I am your Dharma (i.e. Merit).

100a. Realising this, be calm and preserve me.

Durvāsas said :

100b-101a. If now Dharma has approached me, then tell me the reason for this (i.e. your arrival), O Dharma, what do (i.e. can) I do for you?

Dharma said :

101b-102a. O best brāhmaṇa, why are you angry? What wrong have they done? Tell me the reason, O Durvāsas, if you (so) desire.

Durvāsas said :

102b-104. O god, listen to the reason for which I am angry. I have purified my body with restraint, purity and sufferings. I have practised penance for a period of a lakh of years. You see me like this, (and yet) compassion is not produced in you. Therefore, I am angry with you, and today only I shall give you a curse.

105a. Having heard thus (i.e. these words) from (i.e. uttered by) him, the very intelligent (Dharma) said to him.

Dharma said :

105b-108a. O you very intelligent one, when I perish, the world will perish. O dear brāhmaṇa, I very much remove the root of grief. Then afterwards I give pleasure (to the man) if he does not give up truthfulness. One who depends upon (i.e. is after) happiness, is a sinner. Merit is gained with pain. (When) a being thus practising merit casts his life, I give him great happiness in the next world; there is no doubt about it.

Durvāsas said :

108b-110. Great grief is reached by him (in the next world) by whom pleasure is obtained (here); but one mortal gives it up, and somebody else enjoys it. Then who knows (what) happiness (is)? Nobody sees (i.e. knows) it definitely. I am not seeing (any) felicity; you have done an unjust thing. The body which does (certain things) does not enjoy that happiness.

111-113. Suffering is had by one body (while) happiness is enjoyed by another body. So who knows happiness, injustice or righteousness? One suffers, while someone else gets happiness. O Dharma, whatever a man enjoys is accompanied with felicity. By it alone he gets religious merit, and also (good) fruit. The (fruit of) pious rites done by one is enjoyed by another.

114-117a. All that is called happiness, whose characteristics are narrated in scriptures, and it is not otherwise. They suffer unhappiness with the same body with which they perform (bad acts). Therefore by this (behaviour) they do not enjoy in the next world also. Realising this, you who are righteous, should properly observe. How is it that happiness is not enjoyed (by a man) as the very sinful thieves suffer poignant grief with great difficulty with their bodies?

Dharma said :

117b-118. The sinful ones suffer pain with that body only with which they commit sins; for that is the fruit of a sin. The wise have observed in the law-books that Daṇḍa (i.e. punishment) is superior.

119a. You yourself (should) understand it in its essential characteristics according to these rules.

Durvāsas said :

119b-120a. O lord of virtue, listen, what, I think, (conforms to justice): I, being angry, will give you three curses; this cannot be otherwise.

Dharma said :

120b-122. O you highly intelligent one, since you are angry, (please) forgive me. If you are not (prepared) to forgive me, then,

O best brāhmaṇa, make me the son of a maid, also a king, and a Cāṇḍāla also, O great sage. O brāhmaṇa, be favourably disposed to me, who am always bowing to you.

Then the angry Durvāsas cursed Dharma.

Durvāsas said :

123. O Dharma, you today become a king, (then) the son of a maid, not otherwise; go to (i.e. be born in) the family of a Cāṇḍāla; O Dharma, go as you desire.

124. Thus giving three curses, the best brāhmaṇa left. It is said that formerly Dharma was seen in this connection also.

Somaśarman said :

125. How (i.e. in what form) was Dharma born when cursed by that noble (Durvāsas)? O you beautiful lady, if you know, (then) tell me (about) his form.

Sumanā said :

126-128. Being Yudhiṣṭhira, Dharma was born in the family of the Bharatas. He was also born as Vidura, a maid's son. I (shall) also tell you something else. When King Hariścandra was tormented by Viśvāmitra, the very intelligent one became a Cāṇḍāla. Thus even the noble Dharma enjoyed the fruit of his actions due to Durvāsas' curse. I have told the truth to you.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Sumanā Explains Ten Basic Virtues

Somaśarman said :

1. O beautiful lady, tell me in detail the characteristics of Celibacy if you know them. Of what nature is Celibacy?

Sumanā said :

2. (He is a true celibate) who is always interested in truth; he the righteous one would (i.e. is) always be satisfied; and

being free from faults would approach (i.e. cohabit with) his own wife when she menstruates.

3-4a. He never gives up the good practices of his family. O best brāhmaṇa, I have told you this (i.e. these characteristics) of a householder. I have indeed explained to you the celibacy of (i.e. as observed by) householders.

4b-6a. Now I shall explain to you the celibacy of (i.e. as observed by) the ascetics. Listen to me who am explaining it. He is always endowed with restraint and truthfulness; and is always afraid of sin. Avoiding (i.e. he avoids) union with his wife, he is settled in meditation and knowledge. I have (thus) told you the celibacy of the ascetics.

6b-9a. (Now) I shall just explain penance. Listen to me who am explaining it. Free from carnal desires and anger he should behave according to the (proper)rules. He remains full of exertion for obliging beings. I have thus explained penance. (Now) I shall speak about truthfulness in the same manner. He is called truthful, whose mind, on seeing other's wealth or wives, would (i.e. does) not have longing for them.

9b-16a. I shall just explain charity by means of which human beings live. He who desires his own happiness in this or in the next world, should make the great gift of food or (i.e.) of eternal happiness. Similarly at least a morsel should be given to one who is oppressed by hunger. There is no misgiving about it. When (food) is given (like this) it leads to great religious merit, and he ever obtains immortality. Everyday a man should give, as is possible according to his wealth, grass, a bed, words, very cool shadow of (i.e. shelter in his) house; so also he should give land, water, food, excellent pleasing words, a seat, words free from crookedness. He, who, for his own existence, daily does this, and honouring deities and manes, thus give gifts, is happy in this world and in the next world also. He, who, even being born as a human being, would make (every) day fruitful by means of giving gifts, study and (other) rites, is (just) a god; there is no doubt about this.

16b-18a. I shall explain to you restraint (*niyama*) —the excellent means of religious merit. (He is a restrained person) who is engaged in worshipping deities and brāhmaṇas, is always

full of restraint and is engaged in vows like giving gifts and other meritorious obligations. This is restraint that I have explained.

18b-20. O best of brāhmaṇa, I shall now explain the nature of forgiveness. (Please) listen. Hearing the loud cry of someone being beaten by someone else, he should not get angry, and should not beat (back) even if he is beaten. The pious one should be patient. He has no attachment. He gets great happiness here (i.e. in this world) and in the next world.

21-22a. I have thus explained forgiveness. Now I shall explain purity. He is pure, who is pure externally and internally, and is free from attachment. He lives with such practices as bath and sipping water.

22b-23. I have thus explained purity. Now I shall tell you about non-violence. One who knows should not (i.e. one should not deliberately) pull off even (a blade of) grass. He should be devoted to harmlessness; should look upon others as upon himself.

24-25a. I shall (now) explain tranquility. A man gets happiness through tranquility. He should observe tranquility, and should not at all give it up because of trouble. Giving up enmity with beings, he should thus make up his mind.

25b-26. Thus I have explained tranquility. Now I shall tell about non-stealing. A man should not snatch away other's wealth or should not kidnap other's wife, mentally, by words or physically (i.e. should not think or talk about or do these things). Thus he should make up his mind.

27-28a. O best brāhmaṇa, I shall just explain to you sense-control (dama). Being sensible and controlling himself, he should destroy the insolence of his senses and his mind susceptible to emotions by curbing them.

28b-32a. I shall explain to you service (śuśrūṣā) as is told in religious texts, and shall tell you about it as it is explained by former preceptors. By means of words, mind and body one should accomplish his preceptor's mission. That is said to be service where (i.e. by which) favour is produced. O best brāhmaṇa, I have explained to you Dharma (i.e. righteousness) in all its forms. O my husband, I shall tell you anything more that you desire to hear. A man who always lives in (i.e. practises) Dharma like this is never again born in this mundane existence.

32b. By means of (practising) Dharma he goes to heaven. I am telling you the truth, (and) the truth (only).

33-34a. Knowing thus, O you highly intelligent one, go to (i.e. practise) Dharma. O dear one, everything, that is difficult to be accomplished on earth is obtained by the favour of Dharma. (Please) do only what I tell you.

34b-35. Hearing the words of his wife, the very intelligent Somaśarman, again spoke to his wife, Sumanā, who explained Dharma.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Sumanā Describes the Death of the Virtuous

Somaśarman said :

1. O good lady, how do you do such an excellent and highly meritorious exposition of Dharma? From whom did you learn this?

Sumanā said :

2. O you very intelligent one, well-known Cyavana, well-versed in all (branches of) knowledge, and born in the family of the Bhārgavas was my father.

3-4. I was his dear daughter, dearer to him than his own life. Always playing, I used to go with him wherever he went—to sacred places, groves, assemblies of sages and temples of deities, O you of a good vow.

5-6. Very intelligent Vedaśarman, born in the family of Kauśika, a friend of my father, overcome by great grief and repeatedly brooding, while wandering by chance came (to my father).

7. My father said to the noble one who had come (to him): "O you of a good vow, I feel that you are tormented by grief. Tell me the cause by which you are (thus) afflicted."

8-10. Hearing these words of that magnanimous Cyavana, he i.e. Vedaśarman, of a good vow, told my father the cause of his entire grief, O you very wise one: "My very chaste wife, solely devoted to me—her husband—is sonless; I do not have any lineage. I have told you the cause, since I was asked about it by you."

11-12a. In the meantime, there came a divine seer having supernatural faculties. Both my father and that Vedaśarman got up and honoured him with devout offerings, food and sweet words; and both of them asked the secret, as you had asked me before.

12b-14. The pious one told both my father and his friend the means of Dharma, as I had told you before: "By (practising) Dharma (i.e. religious precepts), a son, wealth, corn, and also wives are obtained."

15. Then that Vedaśarman fully practised Dharma. From that (i.e. by practising that) Dharma, there was great happiness, along with a son, for him.

16. In consequence of that meeting (between the Siddha and the two friends) I am convinced as I told you about the very auspicious words, O my dear husband.

17. Always follow the practices laid down for a brāhmaṇa, as were heard from the great Siddha, and which would remove all (your) doubts.

Somaśarman said :

18. O my dear wife, tell me what kind of death or birth (does one have?). Tell me all about the nature of both.

Sumanā said :

19. I shall tell you how death comes to him who has practised Dharma by means of truthfulness, purity, forbearance, tranquility and religious merit (and by visits to) sacred places etc.

20-22. He does not contract any disease, nor is there any suffering in his body. He does not have to toil, he has no fatigue, perspiration, and he does not commit an error. Gandharvas, and brāhmaṇas, taking up divine forms and ready with Vedic texts, and conversant with the knowledge of singing, come to his side

(i.e. to him) and sing his matchless praise. He is composed, and seated on a seat is indeed engaged in the worship of deities.

23-30. He, very much devoted to religious practices, and a wise one, obtains a sacred place for bath. If a man remains in a fire-chamber, in a cowpen, in temples of deities, in a grove or a lake, or a place where there is the aśvattha tree, and also if he remains by resorting to (i.e. under) a palāśa or an undumbara tree or a bilva tree[1] also, and by resorting to (i.e. in) a stable of horses, or of elephants, or if he remains by resorting to (i.e. under) an aśoka three or a mango tree, also in the vicinity of brāhmaṇas, or (even) if he has gone to the abode of old age (i.e. even if he has become old), or after he resorts to (i.e. goes to) a battle-field and dies, these places where he dies are holy. The cause for this (i.e. such a death) is Dharma alone. Reaching (i.e. choosing) the sacred place called Gographa or Amarakaṇṭakā,[2] he, loving pious practices and of a pious conduct, also practices Dharma. When the best man resorts to death (i.e. when he dies), he sees his mother and his meritorious father; also, he sees his brother endowed with virtue, his kinsmen and friends. In the same way, he, being praised by bards, would not at all see his most sinful mother or father etc.

31-34. The Gandharvas sing songs and the panegyrists praise him with panegyrics; brāhmaṇas would honour him with the recitations of hymns and his mother would honour him with love; his father, the groups of his relatives would honour the pious and highly intelligent man. O lord, I have thus narrated to you the messengers and the holy places. He actually sees the messengers full of love (for him). That king of Dharma (i.e. Yama) would invite you, not in a dream or through troublesome delusion. O noble one, come (to that place) where that Dharma stands.

35-38. He (i.e. who practises Dharma) has no delusion, not error, no languor, no confusion of memory. There is no doubt that he remains with a pleased mind. Endowed with sacred and worldly knowledge, and remembering god Janārdana (i.e.

1. Brahmavṛkṣa—palāśa or udumbara tree. Śrivṛkṣa—bilva tree, or aśvattha or the sacred fig-tree.

2. Amarakaṇṭaka—Name of that part of the Vindhya range, which is near the source of the river Narmadā.

Viṣṇu), he, with his mind thus pleased, goes with them. In his case, when he casts his body, unity (with the Supreme Spirit) takes place. Resorting to the tenth aperture[1] his soul goes (out of his body). A palanquin or a beautiful vehicle with swans yoked to it, or an aeroplane or an excellent horse or elephant comes (to carry him).

39-41. Then the pious and meritorious man, with an umbrella held over his head, being fanned with chowries and fans, and endowed with all pleasures, being praised with songs by singers and bards, and eulogised by learned brāhmaṇas—masters of the Vedas, and praised by the good, obtains the fruit in accordance with the efficacy of his charity.

42-43a. Happily he goes to the gardens and orchards. Mixed (i.e. surrounded) with celestial nymphs and endowed with auspicious things, and being praised by gods, he sees the lord of Dharma (i.e. Yama).

43b-47. Gods with Dharma go forward to (greet) him (and say:) "O magnanimous one, come, come (and) enjoy pleasures as you like." In this way he sees the very intelligent Dharma of a pleasing form; and due to the efficacy of his own religious merit he enjoys heaven itself. The pious one, after the exhaustion of his pleasures, is reborn. Due to his own religious merit he goes to (i.e. is born in) the family of a pious brāhmaṇa or a kṣatriya, or of a rich man, or of a very pious vaiśya, O you very intelligent one. There he rejoices with (i.e. due to) his pious acts and he again performs (deeds leading to) religious merit.

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1. Daśamadvāra=Brahma-randhra.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Death of Sinners

Somaśarman said :

1. O good and beautiful lady, tell me, if you know it, in detail, what characteristics apper at the death of sinners.

Sumanā said :

2-4a. O my dear husband, listen; I shall tell you what I learnt from the Siddha about the death of the sinners and what its marks are. I (shall) also tell you about the place and actions of great sinners. A very wicked man reaches a region which is inauspicious due to its being impure on account of excretion and urine; and has a painful death.

4b-7a. That (wicked man) being afflicted, reaches the land of a cāṇḍāla, or a land roamed over by donkeys or resorts to a prostitute's house, and dies in a painful condition; (or) he dies after having gone to the house of a seller of spirituous liquors which is full of bones, skins and nails, and full of evils and blemishes. Having reached that (place) the wicked one surely dies; (or) having reached some other place with evil practices, he dies.

7b-12a. Now I shall tell you the movements of (Yama's) messengers, desiring (to take) him (to Yama's abode), and frightful, terrible, fearful, very dark and of large bellies, of tawny eyes, yellow and dark-blue, or very white and large-bellied, very tall, very dreadful, resembling dry flesh and marrow, of fearful fangs, fearful, having faces like those of lions and having serpents in their hands. O you very intelligent one, seeing them he trembles and is repeatedly afflicted. All the messengers make loud cries like those of jackals into his ears. Having tied him with nooses round his neck, waist and belly, and overcoming him knock him down. He repeatedly cries—'Ah', 'Ah'.

12b-15a. Now I shall tell the actions of the dying sinners who have taken away another's wealth, molested another's wife, not returned debt or wealth of others taken through greed, enjoyment and infatuation. All the (messengers) seize the neck

of the dying man who commits the great sin of accepting a gift from a bad person.

15b-16a. Whatever sins were formerly committed by that great sinner come to his throat; (this) does not (happen) in any other manner.

16b-21a. Due to obstruction caused by excessive phlegm they produce affliction. Due to servere pains his throat snorts. He weeps and trembles very much. He repeatedly remembers his mother, father, brother and wife. Being deluded by great sin he again forgets them. His life, full of many afflictions, does not depart. He falls, trembles and swoons again and again. The deluded one, thus full of suffering, experiences grief. O my dear husband, listen. His life going (out) with great grief and pain, resorts to his anus and pass out (through it).

21b-22. In this way a being, who is greatly deluded and who is full of greed and infatuation, is carried by Yama's messengers. I shall now tell you about the suffering.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Death & Post-mortem State of Sinners

Sumanā said :

1. That wicked man being burnt and struggling again and again is taken along a path full of a heap of charcoals.

2. Being tormented by the sun's rays, he is taken along that path on which the sun's heat is intense and which is heated by twelve suns.

3. The wicked-minded one is taken along the path, on mountains, inaccessible and shadow-less places, while he is very much tormented by hunger and thirst.

4-5. Being hit by the messengers (of Yama) with maces, swords and hatchets, and being beaten with whips and being censured by them, he is then taken along a cold path and is again served (tormented) by wind. Due to that (severe) cold he becomes afflicted. There is no doubt about it.

6-11a. Being dragged by (Yama's) messengers he is taken to many inaccessible places. In this way, the sinner, the wicked-minded man, who reviles gods and brāhmaṇas, and who commits all sins, is taken by Yama's servants. The wicked-hearted man sees Yama, king of Dharma, who resembles a heap of black collyrium, who is fierce, ruthless, fearful and with (i.e. surrounded by) fearful messengers, who is full of (i.e. who has with him) all diseases, who is accompanied by Citragupta, who is mounted upon a buffalo, who is very fierce due to his large teeth and is very fearful, O best brāhmaṇa. His face resembles death. The wicked-minded man sees Yama, who has worn a yellow garment, who has a mace in his hand, who is besmeared with red sandal, who has adorned himself with red flowers, and whose body is huge. He sees Yama like this.

11b-12. Seeing him approaching, Yama observes him who is outcast from all religions, who is wicked, most sinful and an enemy of the customary law. He would punish (i.e. he punishes) him with tortures and with wooden mallets.

13a. Till the end of the period of a thousand yugas he is parched with heat.

13b-14. Again and again he is roasted in hells of various kinds. The sinner goes to (i.e. is born in) a hellish species among crores of insects. Being miserable and senseless he is parched with heat in an impure (place).

15. Thus certainly does the wicked-hearted man die. Thus the wicked-minded man experiences the fruit of his association with sin.

16-19a. I shall (now) explain (to you) rebirth and the species to which he goes. Having obtained a hundred births as dogs he again experiences (the fruit of) sin. The wicked-hearted one becomes (i.e. is born as) a tiger, and goes to the species of (i.e. is born as) a donkey. Then he goes to the species of (i.e. is born as) a cat, pig or a serpent. He is repeatedly born in all the species of various kinds and in (those of) lower animals. He goes to (i.e. is born among) the sinful birds and in other great species. The sinner goes to the species of (i.e. is born as) cāṇḍāla, bhilla or (as a member of the barbarous tribe called) pulinda.

19b. I have (thus) told you everything about the birth of sinners.

20-21. O my dear husband, listen to the very fearful struggle of them (i.e. of the sinners) at the time of their death. I have told before (i.e. to) you (i.e. explained to you) the practice of sin and merit. O you who show respect to others, like this I shall tell you something else, if you ask.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Story of Somaśarman's Previous Birth

Somaśarman said :

1-2. O respectable lady, you have told (me) the excellent form of Dharma. O you noble one, O you of a good vow, tell me if you know how I would get a son endowed with all virtues. There is no doubt that good acts like charity (are fruitful) in this and the next world.

Sumanā said :

3. Go to Vasiṣṭha who knows (what) virtue (is). Request that great sage. From him you will (learn how to) obtain a son knowing piety and loving it.

Sūta said :

4. When she had said these words, Somaśarman, the best brāhmaṇa (said to her:) "O auspicious lady, I shall follow your words (i.e. advice). There is no doubt about it."

5-6. Speaking thus, the best brāhmaṇa, Somaśarman, quickly went to the omniscient, divine Vasiṣṭha, who was the best among those who practised penance, who lived on the bank of the Ganges in a hermitage, who was the best among the brāhmaṇas, who was full of the flames of lustre and was as it were another sun.

7. He repeatedly, devoutly, saluted the shining, noble, best brāhmaṇa, well-versed in the Vedas, in the manner of a staff (i.e. by prostrating himself before Vasiṣṭha).

8. The very lustrous, sinless son of Brahmā (i.e. Vasiṣṭha), said to him: "O you highly intelligent one, (please) sit comfortably on the auspicious seat."

9-10. Saying so, the best of the yogins again said to him, who was rich in penance: "O noble one, O dear one, is there all well in your house, with your sons, wife, servants, and fires used for sacred rites? Are you alright, and do you always practise virtue?"

11. Speaking thus, the very wise one (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) again said to Suśarman (i.e. Somaśarman): "O best brāhmaṇa, what work dear to you should I do for you ?"

12a. Speaking thus to the brāhmaṇa, Vasiṣṭha ceased (to speak).

12b-13. When that best, noble sage Vasiṣṭha spoke (like that), he (i.e. Somaśarman), spoke to noble Vasiṣṭha, the best among those who practise penance: "O revered sir, (please) listen to my words with a very much pleased mind.

14. O best among the sages, O best brāhmaṇa, if you want to do what I like, (then) remove the doubt expressed by my question.

15-17. O dear one, due to what sin (does) poverty (come to one) and how is it that one does not get happiness? This is my doubt. Tell me due to what sin (this happens). O brāhmaṇa, I am confused with great delusion. I was advised by my dear wife. I, who was eager, was sent to you by her. Then tell me all that which would remove all my doubts. (Please) relieve me from the bondage of the worldly existence."

Vasiṣṭha said :

18. Sons, friends, brother, and kinsmen and relatives are the five kinds of men, according to the difference (depending upon the relation).

19. (About) all of them Sumanā has already told you. O best brāhmaṇa, all those are bad sons, connected on account of debt.

20-24. I shall (now) tell you the auspicious characteristics of a son. That son whose mind is attached to merit, who is always engaged in religious conduct, who is endowed with purity and knowledge, who practises penance, who is best among speakers,

who is very steady in all his acts, who is devoted to Vedic studies, who knows (i.e. has studied) all sacred books, who honours gods and brāhmaṇas, who performs all (kinds of) sacrifices, who is a donor, who gives away (in charity without expecting any reward in return), who speaks agreeable words, who is always intent upon meditation on Viṣṇu, is tranquil, restrained and friendly, who is always devoted to his father and mother and affectionate to his kinsmen, who is a saviour of his family, who is learned, who supports his family—a son endowed with such virtues gives happiness.

25-26. Others connected by relation (as a son) cause grief and tormentation. What is the use of such a useless son? All such (sons) come into the worldly existence as sons and go out of it after causing great tormentation, O you best brāhmaṇa.

27. Again listen to all the wonderful account which I shall tell you about the religious merit which you did and (the practices) you maintained in the previous birth.

Vasiṣṭha continued :

28-31. O you very intelligent one, in the former birth you were a Śūdra, and none else. You were a farmer; you were ignorant; you had great greed; you had one wife; you always hated (others). You had many sons; you never gave away (anything in charity); you did not know religious conduct at all; you had never heard (what) truth (is). You had never given a gift; you had never listened to sacred texts; O you highly intelligent one, you had never undertaken a pilgrimage to a sacred place.

32. Thus, O brāhmaṇa, you practised agriculture repeatedly. O best brāhmaṇa, you again and again guarded animals, all cows, buffaloes and also horses. O best of brāhmaṇas, such deed(s) you did formerly (i.e. in your previous birth).

33. Similarly, through greed you collected much wealth; but you never spent it in a good way.

34. You never gave any present to a worthy person, or seeing a weak person you never showed him any compassion and never gave him money.

35. You also collected beasts like cows and buffaloes, and having sold them you hoarded ample wealth.

36a. (And also you hoarded ample wealth) by selling butter-milk, ghee, milk and curd.

36b-38. Being deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā, O brāhmaṇa, you, thinking of (i.e. taking advantage of) bad times, made food more costly here (only), O best brāhmaṇa. You, who were cruel, never made any present (to anyone). O brāhmaṇa, you never worshipped deities. When the parvan-days arrived, you never gave money to the brāhmaṇas.

39-40a. When the time for Śrāddha came, you never performed it with faith. Your virtuous wife (used to) say: "O you very intelligent one, the day has come. It is time for offering Śrāddha to (my) father-in-law, and to (my) mother-in-law also."

40b-42a. Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) her, you (used to) abandon and run away from your house. You never saw (i.e. cared for) the path of righteousness nor did you ever hear about it. Greed (was) your father, your brother. Greed (was) your kinsmen and relatives. Always forsaking religious conduct, you cherished greed alone.

42b. Therefore, being extremely oppressed by poverty, you became unhappy.

43-48. Everyday great greed increased in your mind, whenever in your house wealth increased. Being burnt by the fire of anxiety, you definitely used to think of wealth even when you used to sleep at night. When the day dawned, you were always pervaded by great delusions: 'When will there be a thousand, a lakh, a crore or one hundred millions or one thousand crores or a billion (coins) in my house?' Thus a thousand, a lakh, a crore, a hundred millions, a thousand crores, a billion (coins) were (collected by you); but (your) greed never went away leaving (i.e. from your) body. (On the contrary) it always increased. You never gave (in charity); you never offered oblations to fire, you never enjoyed (wealth); you dug the earth and deposited (the coins in it) without the knowledge of your sons. O brāhmaṇa, you also always adopted other means to get wealth.

49-51. Being intelligent you also asked people about other means of getting wealth. Asking (people) about spades, colly-

rium[1], explanation (of secret formulae) and minerology, and being fully deluded by greed, you wandered all alone. You always thought of sexual union, and about procedures giving superhuman powers. Always thinking about entering into fissures you asked (people about them).

52-54a. Due to the blazing of fire of greed, you were (reduced to a pitiable plight, always) saying 'Alas, Alas', and had become senseless. O best brāhmaṇa, you were thus infatuated; and had been subdued by destiny. When your wife and sons asked you about that wealth, you never told them (any) account of it, and abandoning life, you went to Yama.

54b-57. Thus I have told you all your former account. O brāhmaṇa, due to this deed (i.e. these deeds) you became indigent and poor. Viṣṇu is pleased with him in whose house, in his worldly existence, the sons are of good character, endowed with knowledge and always interested in truthfulness and in good conduct. He with whom Viṣṇu is pleased, endlessly enjoys in the world of mortals wealth, grains, wife, sons and grandsons. O brāhmaṇa, without Viṣṇu's favour he cannot obtain a wife, sons or a good birth or a good family. That is the highest position of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The Account of Somaśarman's Birth in a Brāhmaṇa Family

Somaśarman said :

1-2. O sage, you told me about my sin in the former birth. O best brāhmaṇa, in what way was I forsaken by śūdrahood and did I obtain brāhmaṇahood? O you well-versed in spiritual and worldly knowledge, tell me all about it.

Vasiṣṭha said :

3. If you think (like listening to them) listen; I shall explain to you, O brāhmaṇa, what religious deeds you did in the former birth.

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1. Añjana—seems to refer to the practice of putting a particular kind of collyrium into the eyes and then to see where wealth may be found. Vāda—seems to be a reference to the exposition of certain secret spells helping to obtain wealth.

4-6. A certain innocent, well-learned brāhmaṇa of a good conduct, religious-minded, and always solely devoted to Viṣṇu wandered over the earth for pilgrimages to sacred places. He, the very intelligent one, while (thus) wandering, came to your house. O best of brāhmaṇas, he requested you for a place to stay (i.e. for accommodation). You with your wife and sons gave it to him (saying:)

7-9a. "O brāhmaṇa, come, come happily (i.e. you are welcome) to my house." You repeatedly said these words to that brāhmaṇa, the devotee of Viṣṇu: "O you of a good vow, live here comfortably; this is your house. Today I am blessed; today I have visited a sacred place. Today I have obtained the fruit of a visit to a sacred place by seeing your two feet."

9b-12. (Then) you showed him the cowpen for his lodging. Having massaged his body you also shampooed his feet. You also washed them with water. You also bathed with the water with which his feet were washed. You thus forthwith gave ghee, curd, milk, food and buttermilk to that noble brāhmṇa. Thus with your wife and sons you pleased that very learned, noble brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu's devotee.

13-16. When it was the dawn of the auspicious and blissful day, on which fell (i.e. which was) the Ekādaśī (eleventh day) of the bright fortnight of Āṣāḍha (called) Pāpanaśinī (the destroyer of sins), which destroyed all sins, and on which day god Hṛṣīkeśa (i.e. Viṣṇu) goes to sleep (called) Yoga-nidrā, O brāhmaṇa, when that day came, all wise men having given up all domestic duties, became engrossed in meditating upon Viṣṇu. With songs and (playing upon) musical instruments they celebrated a great festival. All the brāhmaṇas praised (Viṣṇu) with (hymns from) the Vedas, and very auspicious hymns of praise.

17. When the great festival had come, the best brāhmaṇa stayed there on that day. He (also) fasted properly.

18. The brāhmaṇa recited the hymn to Ekādaśi. With your wife and sons you also listened to the excellent (account of) religious virtue.

19. When that very auspicious (account) was heard by your wife and sons they urged you: "Observe this vow in the company of this brāhmaṇa."

20-26a. Hearing those great (i.e. very important) words, giving all merit, you were determined (to observe it and so said:) "I shall observe this vow." Then going to the river with your wife and sons, you bathed in the river. O brāhmaṇa, with a pleased mind you worshipped Viṣṇu with all (kinds of) auspicious presents and with sandal, incense etc. You kept awake by dancing and singing songs during that night. In the company of that brāhmaṇa you again bathed in the river. Saluting Viṣṇu with devotion and bathing him again and again, you worshipped the lord of gods with auspicious (objects like) flowers, incense etc. and similarly gave a present to that noble brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, having devoutly saluted that brāhmaṇa, you gave him ample presents. Then you broke the fast, O brāhmaṇa, with your sons, wife etc. You sent him (away) with devotion and good feelings.

26b-30a. O best brāhmaṇa, you yourself observed the vow like this, due to the company of that brāhmaṇa, and due to the favour of Viṣṇu. You, endowed with a truthful conduct became (i.e. was born as) a brāhmaṇa. Due to the efficacy of that vow you obtained (i.e. were born in) a great family of brāhmaṇas, wise and of truthful conduct. To that noble brāhmaṇa, devoted to Viṣṇu, you gave well-cooked food with faith and truthfulness. Due to the efficacy of that food sweet food comes to you.

30b-33. O brāhmaṇa, in your previous birth you were deluded through folly, and your mind was pervaded with desire. (So) you collected money only. You did not give it to brāhmaṇas or to helpless persons, or to your wife, as you died through desire for a son (not being satisfied). (So) due to the effect of that sin, poverty, non-fulfilment of your desire, and loss of affection came to you. It is just the result of that sin that you were born sonless.

34-35. O brāhmaṇa, a family with good sons, wealth, grains, excellent wife, good birth or death, excellent enjoyments and happiness, kingdom, heaven and salvation, and all that is difficult to obtain (are obtained) through the favour of that magnanimous Viṣṇu.

36-38. Therefore, by worshipping that Govinda, Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya, you will obtain that highest position i.e. the highest position of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, I have fully told you about having good sons, wealth, grains, excellent enjoyments and happi-

ness, and all the deeds that you did in your former birth. O blessed one, knowing thus be solely devoted to Viṣṇu.

39-41. The best brāhmaṇa of great prowess was (thus) advised by Brahmā's son (i.e. Vasiṣṭha). The noble one, being full of joy, having saluted Vasiṣṭha there, and having taken his leave of that brāhmaṇa (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) went home. Joyfully approaching his wife Sumanā, (he said to her:) "O auspicious lady, due to your favour that brāhmaṇa, Vasiṣṭha, told me all my former account and behaviour. Today only my delusion is destroyed. I shall just propitiate Viṣṇu and shall reach that highest position, viz. salvation."

42. Hearing those excellent, great, very auspicious words bringing about happiness, she, full of joy, said to her husband: "You are lucky (that) you are advised by that brāhmaṇa."

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Somaśarman's Eulogy of Viṣṇu

Sūta said :

1-3. The very intelligent, the best (brāhmaṇa) Somaśarman, having bathed, with (his wife) Sumanā, at the auspicious (sacred place called) Kapilāsaṅgama,[1] on the bank of Revā, causing great merit, he, the intelligent one, and of a good vow, having gratified (with oblations) gods and manes, practised penance there, with a very calm mind and with meditation, muttering with the hymn of twelve syllables (the name) of auspicious Viṣṇu—that Vāsudeva, the magnanimous god of gods.

4. Always being steady and without desire and anger he saw Viṣṇu (only) (while sitting) on a seat, or (lying) on a bed or (going) in a vehicle or in a dream.

1. Kapilāsaṅgama or Kapilā-tīrtha—Anyone bathing there and performing worship obtains a thousand brown cow. See Mahābhārata (critical edition published by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona) 3.81.38.

5. That virtuous, glorious Sumanā, devoted to her husband, served only her husband endowed with penance.

6-9. Various obstacles frightened him who was meditating. Great black serpents of strong poison came near that Somaśarman; and also were seen lions and tigers. They simply frightened him. Vampires, demons, imps, spirits of dead persons and also jackals showed him terrible fear, (capable of) destroying life. Very terrible lions of various kinds, with fearful fangs and cruel came there and roared very fiercely.

10-26. The best, virtuous sage, the intelligent (Somaśarman), disturbed by the growing great obstacles was not distracted from his meditation on Viṣṇu. (Though) the best brāhmaṇa Somaśarman was very much harassed by very high winds in the rainy season, cold, or heavy showers, he did not move away from meditation. A very fearful lion roaring (terribly) came there. Seeing him, and being frightened, the brāhmaṇa (Somaśarman) remembered god Viṣṇu, who resembled a sapphire, who had put on a yellow garment, who was having a great prowess, who held a conch and a disc and a mace and a lotus, who was shining with a necklace of big pearls resembling the moon in beauty and also with jewel (called) Kaustubha[1], whose chest shines with the divine mark (called) Śrīvatsa, whose body looked charming due to all ornaments, whose eyes resembled lotuses, whose face had a charming smile on it, and was very much pleased, who looked charming and shone with a jewelled necklace. He verily meditated upon (Viṣṇu:) "O Kṛṣṇa, affectionate to those who seek your shelter; my salutation (to you) the god of gods; what will fear do to me? I have sought the refuge of him, in whose belly remain the three worlds and the seven magnanimous ones. Where then is fear for me? I have sought the refuge of him, the destroyer of all fears, from whom all very powerful fears like Kṛtyā etc. proceed. I have sought the refuge of him, who is a great fear to all sins and demons, and who is the protector of Viṣṇu's (i.e. his) devotees. I have sought the refuge of him who is the refuge of all the eminent, magnanimous demons, the devotees of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. his devotees). I have sought the refuge of him, who being fearless destroys fears, and who

1. Kaustubha—Name of a celebrated gem obtained with 13 other jewels at the churning of the ocean and worn by Viṣṇu on his chest.

possessing knowledge, destroys sins, and who alone remains in the form of Indra. I have sought the refuge of him, who, being of the form of herbs, removes diseases, and who (himself) is pure and entirely full of bliss. I have sought the refuge of him, who, himself being fixed, would move the worlds, and being sinless is knowledge (itself); (then) what will fear do to me? He, Anāmaya (i.e. Viṣṇu) is the guardian of all good people; he, the universal soul, protects the universe. I have sought his refuge. I have sought the refuge of him who, in the form of a lion, shows great fear to me (standing) in front (of me). I salute that (Viṣṇu) in the form of Narasiṁha.

27-28. (In the form of) an intoxicated, huge elephant (he) has come. I have well sought the refuge of him, who has the face of an elephant, who is endowed with knowledge, who holds a noose and a goad, who has a black face like that of an elephant.

29. I have sought the refuge of (that Viṣṇu who in his) Boar[1] (form) killed Hiraṇyākṣa. I have taken shelter with that Vāmana, affectionate to those who seek his shelter.

30. All the short, dwarfish, hump-backed spirits of dead persons and imps etc., holding the form of death, frighten me.

31-38. I have taken shelter with the immortal. What will fear do to me? Viṣṇu is of Brahmā, he is the giver of Brahman (i.e. takes one to the supreme spirit), he is Brahmā, and is full of the knowledge of Brahman; I have taken shelter with him; what (then) will fear do to me? He who is fearless, who removes the fear of the world and himself causes fear, and is of the form of fear—I have taken shelter with him. What will fear do to me? I have sought the shelter of that Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) of the form of Dharma, who is the emancipator of all worlds and the destroyer of all sinners. I shall seek his refuge who takes up a wonderful form, foreign to gods, in a war. He is always my shelter. A terrible storm afflicts my body very much. I have taken shelter with him; he is always my refuge. I have sought the refuge of that god who torments in these forms viz. of very cold, heavy showers and heat. These, of the form of death have come here, and are disturbing me. I have always taken the shelter of these forms of Viṣṇu.

1. Varāha—the Boar-form of Viṣṇu.

39. I take the shelter with that Viṣṇu, the first Siddha and the lord of Siddhas, whom they call all-good, the highest lord, exclusively alone, full of knowledge and brilliant."

40. Thus everyday meditating upon and praising Viṣṇu, the destroyer of afflictions, he brought Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) into his heart through devotion.

41. Seeing the exertion and courage of that Somaśarman, Viṣṇu, being delighted, manifested himself before him and said:

42. "O very intelligent Somaśarman, listen with your wife. O best brāhmaṇa, I am Viṣṇu; O you of a good vow, ask for a boon."

43-47. (Thus) addressed by him, the best brāhmaṇa (i.e. Somaśarman) having opened both his eyes, saw that god, the lord of the universe, who was dark like a cloud, who was very glorious, whose body was charming due to all ornaments, who was endowed with all weapons, who was endowed with divine characteristics, whose eyes resembled lotuses, who was with (i.e. who was clad in) a yellow garment, who, the lord of gods, was shining, who was mounted upon Garuḍa, who had held a conch, a disc and a mace (in his hands), who was the great saviour of Brahmā and others, and also of this world, who was always beyond this universe, who was above (all) forms, who was the lord of the worlds. The very glorious brāhmaṇa, full of great joy, prostrated himself before him who was accompanied by Śrī (Lakṣmī or grandeur), who was shining, and had the lustre like that of a crore of suns.

48-57. With Sumanā, he joined the palms of his hands (i.e. saluted him) and said: "Victory to you; victory to you, Mādhava, who removes pride. Victory to you, who sleep on the body of the serpent (viz. Śeṣa). Victory to you, O Yajñāṅga, O lord of sacrifices. Victory to you, O eternal and omnipresent one. Victory to you, O lord of all, O eternal one, O you of the form of sacrifice; my salutation to you. Victory to you, O best among those who possess knowledge. Victory to you, O giver of everything; victory to you, O omniscient one, and cause of all. Victory to you, O lord of the original forms of souls; saltuation to you, O great soul. Victory to you, O giver of wisdom, O Prajñāṅga (i.e. having wisdom as one of his parts); victory to you, O giver of life. Victory to you, O destroyer of sins, the lord of merit.

Victory to you, O Viṣṇu, the controller of merit. Victory to you, O you of the form of knowledge; salutation to you, who can be comprehended by knowledge. Victory to you, O you having eyes like lotus-petals. Salutation to you, Padmanābha (from whose navel sprang the lotus). Victory to you, O Govinda, O Gopāla, victory to you, O holder of the disc; salutation to you whose forms are unmanifest and manifest. Victory to you, O you, whose body is charming due to your valour; victory to you, the leader of valour; victory to you, O you, who have Lakṣmī as a part of your sport. Salutation to you, full of the Vedas. Victory to you, O you whose body is charming due to your valour; victory to you, O you who give diligence; victory to (you) who put an end to all exertion, victory to (you, O Viṣṇu who are yourself) exertion. Victory to you who are capable of elevation, victory to you who had the three elevations (i.e. three steps). Salutation to you, who undertake exertion and who are Dharma.

58-59. Salutation to you, having a golden seed. Salutation to you who are lustre. Salutation to you, who are of the form of great brilliance, and who are full of all lustre. Salutation to you, who destroy the prowess of the demons, and who remove evil lustre. Salutation to you who (work) for the well-being of cows and brāhmaṇas, and to you, who are the highest soul.

60-71. Salutation to you, the enjoyer of the offerings and the carrier of the oblations to gods. Salutation to you, the carrier of the oblations to the manes and to you of the form of Svadhā. Repeated salutations to you, of the nature of Svāhā, to you, who are the sacrifice and who are the purifier. Salutation to you who hold the Śārṅga bow in your hand, to Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) the remover of sins. Salutation to you who direct the good and the bad, and who shine with wisdom. Salutations (to you), of the form of Vedas, and the purifier. Salutation to you of tawny hair, and the remover of all afflictions, to (you) the highest Keśava, and the sustainer of everything. Salutation to you who favours (all) and who are full of joy. My constant salutation to you, the eternal, pure one, the destroyer of suffering. My constant salutation to you, who are joy, who are pure and who are perfect; to you, whose feet are saluted by Rudra and who are saluted by Brahmā. Salutation to you, whose lotus-like feet are saluted by the lords of gods and demons. Repeated salutations to you who

are the highest lord, who are unconquered and whose heart is full of nectar. Salutation to you, whose abode is the milky ocean; to you to whom Lakṣmī is dear. Repeated salutations to you, who are Oṁkāra, are pure, and who are stable. Repeated salutations to you who are comprehensive and who pervade (everything), and you who destroy all calamities. Repeated salutations to you of the form of Vāmana, and to you, noble Nṛsiṁha. Salutation to you, divine Paraśurāma, who killed all the kṣatriyas. Salutation to you, who are omniscient, who are Matsya and Rāma. Salutation to you, who are Kṛṣṇa, Buddha and the destroyer of Mlecchas. Salutation to you, the brāhmaṇa (named) Kapila, and Hayagrīva. Salutation to you, of the nature of Vyāsa and to you who have every form."

72-75. Having thus praised Hṛṣīkeśa, he then said to that Janārdana: "O you purifier, Brahmā does not know you, the farthest limit of virtues; neither omniscient Rudra (i.e. Śiva), nor the thousand-eyed (Indra) is able to praise you. Who can describe you? O lord, of what kind (i.e. how limited) is my intellect? O Keśava, I have praised you, who are qualityless and having qualities. O you of a good vow, (please) forgive me for my words—bad words; I am your servant. O you purifier, O you lord of the words, (please) forgive me, birth after birth."

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Birth of Suvrata

Hari said :

1-2. O brāhmaṇa, I am pleased by this meritorious penance of yours, and also by your truthfulness; and I am also pleased by the holy hymn of praise. Choose a boon. O you illustrious one, I shall grant you the boon that you have (i.e. cherish) in your mind. I shall fulfil (i.e. satisfy) whatever desire you entertain.

Somaśarman said:

3. O Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), first, with a pleased mind, grant

me a boon much desired by me, if you have good (i.e. great) pity for me.

4. Getting birth after birth (i.e. in every existence) I shall be devoted to you. Show me the highest, stable place, giving (me) salvation.

5-8a. O Keśava, (give me) a son, who will emancipate his family, who will be endowed with divine characteristics, who will be always intensely devoted to Viṣṇu, who will sustain (i.e. continue) my family, who will know everything and grant everything, who will be endowed with the lustre of penance, who will always protect and honour gods, brāhmaṇas and (other) people, who will be pious, who will be a donor and will be mature in intellect due to knowledge. Give me such a son, (and) remove my poverty. May it be so certainly (lit. there is no doubt). I choose this boon.

Hari said:

8b-11. O best brāhmaṇa, may it be so. Undoubtedly it will take place. By my favour, may you have a good son, who would emancipate your family. You will enjoy divine and human boons here (i.e. in this world). Perceiving great, virtuous happiness due to your son, you will, O brāhmaṇa, not see (i.e. experience) unhappiness as long as you live. You will be a donor, an enjoyer and will appreciate merits. There is no doubt about this. You will meet with death at a sacred place (and) will obtain the highest position.

12. Thus having granted a boon to that brāhmaṇa dear to him, the lord vanished. He was seen as (though seen) in a dream.

13-21. Then that best brāhmaṇa Somaśarman, (accompanied) with (his wife) Sumanā, gave auspicious gifts at the great and purifying sacred place Amarakaṇṭaka, on the auspicious bank of Revā, giving merit. When a very long time of that Somaśarman passed (i.e. when he thus passed a long time), he bathed at the confluence of Kapilā and Revā and set out. In front of him the brāhmaṇa saw a white elephant, which was very bright, beautiful, divine, of a profuse ichor, and of charming (i.e. auspicious) marks, with his body looking beautiful on account of many ornaments, and endowed with great grace.

Both his temples shone with red lead and saffron. (He saw the elephant) whose ears were having blue lotuses on them, and which was having a banner and a staff. On the elephant was seated a divine, very bright man, who was endowed with divine marks, and who was adorned with all ornaments, who had put on divine flowers and who was besmeared with divine sandal. The best (brāhmaṇa, Samaśarman) saw him to be very pleasing like the moon, and endowed with an umbrella and chowries, and going, after having mounted the elephant (i.e. being carried by the elephant). (He saw the man) who was very auspiciously being praised by Siddhas, bards and Gandharvas. Seeing that beautiful, excellent elephant and the man with divine characteristics, Somaśarman, with his mind full of amazement, reflected :

22-27. 'Who is this, of a divine body and a good vow, going after having reached (i.e. along) the path?' When, thinking like this, Somaśarman came to his house, (he saw) the divine charming form entering (through) the door of his house. Full of great joy, the religious-minded, best brāhmaṇa, Somaśarman, quickly went to his house; but when he went upto the door of his house he did not see him, (but instead) the very intelligent one (saw) charming divine, fragrant flowers fallen in the courtyard (of his house). Seeing this courtyard besmeared with auspicious, fragrant sandal and saffron, and with dūrvā grass and sacred rice grains, he, thus amazed, and reflecting repeatedly, saw Sumanā with divine and auspicious excellence.

Somaśarmana said :

28. Who gave (you) these divine ornaments, (this) fortune in the form an excellent dress, and decoration (in the form) of garments and ornaments?

29. O good one, then, without any apprehension tell me the reason.

Thus speaking to his wife, the best brāhmaṇa ceased (speaking).

Sumanā said :

30-31. O my husband, listen. Someone best among the gods, mounted upon a white elephant, adorned with divine ornaments,

with his body smeared with divine sandal, endowed with divine wonders, had come. I do not know which deity he was (who was) served by brāhmaṇas and Gandharvas.

32-38a. He, who was being praised by gods, Gandharvas and bards, had come. With him were ladies who were endowed with auspicious forms, with beauty and excellent dresses, with charm due to all ornaments, and all with their desires satisfied. In front of them the illustrious man filled our quadrangle with gems and is (therefore) endowed with all charm. Then I was placed on an auspicious seat by brāhmaṇas. All of them gave me garments, ornaments and decorations. They all consecrated me with auspicious Vedic hymns and meritorious songs from the sacred texts, and they again disappeared. O best brāhmaṇa, all of them (being) around me, again said : "We shall always dwell in your house. O you auspicious one, always remain undefiled along with your husband." Speaking thus, they all left. Thus only (i.e. this much only is what) I saw.

38b-45a. The very intelligent one, having heard the account told by her, again reflected: 'What is this brought about by the lord?' Thus thinking the very wise Somaśarman engaged himself in the religious duties of a brāhmaṇa. That illustrious Sumanā observing a vow became pregnant from him. That respectable lady then looked more beautiful due to that embryo. She was endowed with the flame of lustre as she was having that bright son (in her womb). She, due to (the efficacy of) her penance, gave birth to a son resembling a god. At that time divine drums resounded in the sky. Great gods blew conches, Gandharvas sang charming songs; and indeed all the celestial nymphs danced at that time. Then the calm, best brāhmaṇa, Brahmā, having come there with gods, named him (i.e. the boy) Suvrata. Having named him, all the gods of great prowess left.

45b-57. When the gods had left, the best brāhmaṇa Somaśarman performed rites like the birth-rite (of the boy). When the illustrious son Suvrata, brought into existence by gods, was born, there was great prosperity in his house mixed with (i.e. full of) wealth and grains; and also (there were) elephants, buffaloes and cows, gold and jewels. The house of that Somaśarman shone as the house of Kubera shone with heaps of wealth.

The best brāhmaṇa performed rites like meditation (and other) auspicious deeds. The brāhmaṇa, full of many merits went on a pilgrimage. The intelligent one, endowed with knowledge and merit, gave there auspicious gifts. With great joy he celebrated the marriage of the son. The son's sons, virtuous and endowed with good signs, were born. They were endowed with truthfulness, righteousness and penance. Somaśarman performed all auspicious rites of (i.e. about) them; and the illustrious one was happy with their grandsons. He enjoyed all pleasures and was without (i.e. free from) old age and diseases. His body was as (if) he was twentyfive years old. That very wise Somaśarman was lustrous like the sun. That noble, respectable lady Sumanā also shone with pious and auspicious (things), with sons and grandsons, and with vows and restraints. With auspicious vows like (being very loyal to) the husband, the large-eyed one shone excellently. She was (so much) endowed with youth that she was as it were sixteen year old.

58-60. The magnanimous, righteous, very prosperous, charming and auspicious couple was delighted and full of joy. O best brāhmaṇas, thus was their behaviour full of auspicious practices. I shall now tell you the observance of the vows by Suvrata (and) how he (obtained bliss) by having propitiated Nārāyaṇa Anāmaya (i.e. Viṣṇu).

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Suvrata's Devotion to Viṣṇu

Sūta said :

1. Once that resplendent Vyāsa, being extremely amazed, asked Brahmā, the lord of the world, (about) the entire account of Savrata.

Vyāsa said :

2. O soul of the worlds, O you in whom the worlds are deposited, O god of gods, O great lord, I now desire to hear the life-account of Suvrata.

Brahmā said :

3. O you noble Pārāśarya (i.e. son of Parāśara), listen to the meritorious, excellent account, full of practice of penance, of the brāhmaṇa Suvrata.

4-8. The intelligent Suvrata reflected upon Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), even from his childhood, (since) he had seen (that) god Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa while (still) in the womb (of his mother). Due to his having performed (good) deeds (in the) former (birth), he always meditated upon Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu). He meditated and reflected upon that god Padmanābha, holding a conch and a disc and giving great merit, in (i.e. while he sang) songs, (did) study and recitations. Thus the best brāhmaṇa, the excellent boy, always reflecting upon Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) only, always played with children. The intelligent, pious one, loving merit, named the sons of him, the magnanimous one (i.e. his own sons), after Hari. The very intelligent one called his friend by Hari's name:

9-16. 'O Keśava, come, come along; O Mādhava come; O Cakradhṛk (i.e. the disc-holder i.e. Viṣṇu) come; O Puruṣottama, play with me only. O Madhusūdana, we shall go together only.' In this way the brāhmaṇa called (others) by the names of Hari, while playing, reciting, laughing, lying, singing or viewing (something), or in a vehicle, on a seat, while meditating, (reciting) sacred hymns, or comprehending or (doing) good acts. He saw Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) the lord of the world only; he talked to him only. He the very wise one, meditated upon (i.e. saw) that great lord, the ruler of the world viz. Keśava, Govinda, having lotus-like eyes, in grass, in wood, in a dry or wet (object), and also in the sky, on the ground, on mountains, in forests, in water, on dry land, in a stone or in beings. (Thus) Sumanā's son, that brāhmaṇa Suvrata, that religious-minded one, saw Nṛsiṁha (i.e. Viṣṇu) everywhere. Resorting to a child's sports he thus played everyday; and sang about Kṛṣṇa with songs with good musical modes, couched in sweet words, having beating times,[1] or *laya* (i.e. times in music), with charming notes of the gamut and melodies.

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1. Rāga, tāla, laya etc. are terms used in music. Laya—Time in music. It is of three kinds: druta, madhya and vilambita. Mūrcchanā—The rising of sounds, an intonation, a duly regulated rise and fall of sounds, conducting the air and the harmony through the keys in a pleasing manner, changing the key or passing from one key to another.

Suvrata said :

17-24a. Those who know the Vedas always meditate upon him, who is the enemy of demons, in whose body (remains) the entire universe, who is the lord of reflective meditation, and who destroys all sins. I shall seek the shelter of (that) Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), who occupies all the worlds, and in whom all the worlds abide. I salute that highest lord free from all faults and I always salute his pair of feet. Those whose minds are purified by the (study of) Vedānta everyday recite (the hymns about) Nārāyaṇa, the treasure of virtues, and of unlimited power. I seek his shelter in order to cross the entire ocean of the worldly existence which is endless, fathomless and difficult to cross. O enemy of demons, protect this poor one viz. me (who am devoted to) the pure and large pair of the feet of him who is the royal swan in the Mānasa lake (i.e. the minds) of the best reflecting sages, who is pure and whose entire prowess always (continues). I meditate upon the god, the lord of the entire world, who is the moon (that has come) here only to destroy the darkness in the form of grief, who has led Dharma (i.e. piousness) for the protection of the world, who is endowed with truth, who, the lord of the worlds, is the chief of all the worlds. With charming songs and measuring the beatings of time I constantly medidtate upon Śrīraṅga (i.e. Viṣṇu), the lord of the world, destroyer of ignorance, comparable to the sun only, the root of joy, and full of all prowess. I sing with unique joy (the praise of) him who alone is full treasure of the portion of nectar, who is endowed with his senses of deep meditation and who has the true perspective. He always observes the mobile and immobile universe. The very sinful people do not at all see him to be here.

24b. He (i.e. Suvrata) always sought the shelter of that Keśava.

25. Beating the time with (the clappings of) the hands he sang songs (about) Kṛṣṇa and rejoiced with (other) children.

26. Thus, being a child, Suvrata, Sumanā's son, intent on meditating upon Viṣṇu, was engaged in sports.

27. His mother said to Suvrata of fine characteristics, (and) playing: "O my boy, have your meal; hunger might oppress you."

28. The wise Suvrata again said to his mother: "I am satisfied with the great nectar viz. the delight (derived) from the meditation upon Hari."

29-34a. When he got (i.e. sat) upon the seat (used while taking) meal he saw sweet food. (He reflected:) "This food is Viṣṇu (himself); the soul has resorted to this food. May that Viṣṇu who is (present here) in the form of the soul be gratified with this water in which he dwells due to his remaining in the milky ocean. May Keśava, satisfied with his own form be gratified with tāmbūla, sandal, fragrant substances and these charming flowers." When the religious-minded one went to bed, he would reflect upon Kṛṣṇa: "I have sought the refuge of that Kṛṣṇa who is endowed with the Yoganidrā (i.e. his sleep at the end of a yuga)." The brāhmaṇa (Suvrata) would reflect upon that Vāsudeva, while taking meal, while covering himself, on a seat or bed, and would prepare everything for him.

34b-37. When the religious-minded one attained youth, he gave up enjoyment of pleasures and was engaged in meditating upon Keśava on the excellent Vaidūrya mountain, where there is the symbol of Viṣṇu called Siddheśvara and destroyer of sins. He, reflecting upon the great lord called Maheśvara glorified by Brahmā (and situated) on the right bank of Narmadā, and having resorted to Siddheśvara, thought of (practising) penance.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

Dharmāṅgada Born as Suvrata

Vyāsa said :

1-3. O noble one, I shall put one question to you. Now speak (i.e. answer) it; you yourself had formerly said that Suvrata meditated upon lord Nārāyaṇa Anāmaya, due to former practice. In which caste was Suvrata born in his former birth? Now tell that to me (and also) how Hari was propitiated by him. O lord of gods, who is he that is full of merit?

Brahmā said :

4-13. In the auspicious city (called) Vaidiśa, full of all prosperity, (lived) a very lustrous, powerful king, the son of Ṛtadhavaja. His very intelligent son was well-known as Rukmabhūṣaṇa. His loyal wife was the glorious Sandhyāvatī. The king's son (i.e. Rukmabhūṣaṇa) having produced a son on her like himself, named him Dharmāṅgada. This (Dharmāṅgada), the most fortunate son of Rukmāṅgada, was endowed with all auspicious marks and was intensely devoted to his father; and he, for the happiness of his father, even gave his own head to Mohinī. Hṛṣīkeśa (i.e. Viṣṇu) was pleased by his Viṣṇuite way of life and devotion to his father; and took him physically to Viṣṇu's position. He, who knew all codes of conduct, who was a devotee of Viṣṇu, who was best of the Sātvatas, he—Dharmāṅgada, who was very wise, who was well-versed in judgement and knowledge, who was an ornament of piety, living there only gladly enjoyed all divine pleasures according to his desire. When a full thousand yugas were over, he who was piety (himself) and an ornament of piety, dropped from that position, and due to the favour of Viṣṇu, was born as the eldest and most fortunate and intelligent son of Somaśarman, increasing the delight of Sumanā, and named Suvrata. The intelligent one practised penance and was intent upon meditation on Viṣṇu.

14-18a. The best brāhmaṇa, having abandoned blemishes like desire and anger, having controlled the group of senses, continuously practised penance by concentrating his mind and uniting it with Viṣṇu, near Siddheśvara on the best mountain Vaidūrya. The lord of the world, holding a conch, a disc and a mace was well-pleased with the meditation of the noble one, who thus had remained in it for a hundred years. That Keśava, with Lakṣmī, granted him another boon: "O you pious Suvrata, O you best among the wise sages, well-being to you; choose a boon, I am Kṛṣṇa that have come to you."

18b-19. Having heard these excellent words of Viṣṇu, the intelligent one was full of great joy, and seeing god Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), he joining the palms of his hands, saluted him.

Suvrata said :

20. The ocean of mundane existence is full of the waves of

very great (i.e. poignant) griefs, and of the ripples of the heaps of follies. Through my vices and virtues I have reached it. O Janārdana, from it quickly take up me who am helpless.

21-28. When the great cloud of my deeds is thundering, it is raining, lightning is flashing; due to the heaps of my sins and coverings of the darkness of delusion, I do not have (i.e. I have lost my) sight. (So) O Madhusūdana, give your hand to me, who am helpless. This dense forest of the worldly existence is resorted to by (i.e. has) many trees of great grief, and by many lions of the form of follies. It is blazing with the lustre of the great fire of compassion. O Kṛṣṇa, protect me who am constantly being burnt. The tree of the worldly existence is extremely old and also high. It has the bulbous root of illusion and many branches of pity and many afflictions; it has the leaves of union with one's wife etc. It has borne fruit. O lord Murāri, protect me who climbed it and fell from it. O Kṛṣṇa, I am constantly burnt by the fires of griefs, with profuse (columns of) smoke in the form of various delusions, and with distresses like separation resembling death. Give me salvation. Always sprinkle me with water of knowledge, me—who have fallen in the great ditch covered with fearful darkness and called Saṁsāra (i.e. the worldly existence). O Kṛṣṇa, you show a great favour to me who am distressed and suffering from fear. Being disgusted with it, I have sought your refuge. Those, who with controlled minds and full of devotion, meditate upon you with their minds (full of) knowledge, obtain the (highest) position; since saluting the very auspicious pair of your feet the groups of Kinnaras and gods think of you (only). I do not talk to anyone else, I do not worship anyone else, I do not think about anyone else. I (just) continuously salute the pair of your lotus-like feet. O Kṛṣṇa, today satisfy my desire. Let the heap of my sins go far away. I am your slave, I am your servant in existence after existence. I constantly remember the pair of your lotus-like feet.

29-30a. If, O Kṛṣṇa, you are pleased, then grant me a good boon: O great god, with me take (also) my parents physically to your abode. There should be no hesitation about it.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said :

30b. There is no doubt that this great affair of you will take place.

31-35. Hṛṣīkeśa was pleased with him and was very much delighted by his devotion. Free from tormentation and destruction the two viz. Sumanā and Somaśarman, went, along with Suvrata to Viṣṇu's heaven. O you very intelligent one, till a couple of yugas came (i.e. was over) the brāhmaṇa Suvrata enjoyed repeatedly divine worlds. And by the words (i.e. order) of that disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) the very intelligent one again came down to (i.e. was born in) the house of Kaśyapa for the mission of gods; and enjoys Indra's position due to Viṣṇu's favour. Well-known as Vasudatta, and saluted by all gods, he enjoys the position of Indra at present.

36. Thus I have told you the entire cause of the propriety of creation. I shall (even), tell (i.e. explain to) you anything else that you ask.

Vyāsa said :

37. The powerful and very intelligent Dharmāṅgada, the son of Rukmāṅgada, was Indra at the time of creation in the first Kṛtayuga.

38-39a. Then, O lord of gods, how is it that there is another Dharmāṅgada on the earth, and also another king (named) Rukmāṅgada, and how is it that this one is also the lord of gods (i.e. Indra)? This doubt has arisen (in my mind); please explain (i.e. remove) it.

Brahmā said :

39b-40a. Oh, I shall tell you that which will remove your doubt. O best brāhmaṇa, the sport of the god is for the creation.

40b-42. As days, fortnights, months, seasons, years and Manus pass (i.e. come and go) in the same way the yugas again and again pass. Then arrives the Kalpa; then, O very intelligent one, I myself go to Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) and the mobile and the immobile go to (i.e. merge into) me. (Then) he, whose nature is contemplation, again creates the universe as before.

43-44a. Again, I, the Vedas, the deities and brāhmaṇas, as well as all kings with their dispositions are born, O noble one. A wise man is not confused by this.

44b-47. As in the former Kalpa the magnanimous king Rukmāṅgada was born, in the same way this well-known

brāhmaṇa Dharmāṅgada is born (now). The very intelligent ones like Rāma, Yayāti, Nahuṣa,[1] and also the magnanimous Manu and others are born and die. Kings devoted to piety enjoy the position of Indra, as the hero Dharmāṅgada is now enjoying (that) great position. In the same way Vedas, gods, Purāṇas, preceded by Smṛtis (come and go)

48-49. O best brāhmaṇ, I have thus narrated to you Suvrata's entire account which is meritorious and which leads to good position. O noble one, I shall explain to you the invisible (one).

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The Slaying of the Demon Bala

The sages said :

1-2. O you best among speakers, you have told us this wonderful, meritorious, excellent tale, bringing about glory, and destroying all sins. Please tell us the propriety of the creation.

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1. Yayāti—Name of a celebrated king of the lunar race. He was the son o Nahuṣa. He married Śukra's daughter Devayānī, who was cursed by Kaca that she would marry a Kṣatriya. Śarmiṣṭhā, daughter of the king of Asuras was told by her father to be Devayānī's servant as a sort of recompense for her formerly having slapped and thus insulted Devayānī. Yayāti fell in love with Śarmiṣṭhā and secretly married her. Devayānī came to know about the marriage, and complained to her father of the conduct of Yayāti. Śukra cursed him that he would be prematurely old. Yayāti propitiated him and obtained from him permission to transfer his infirmity to anyone who would accept it. His youngest son Pūru agreed to take it. Yayāti enjoyed youth for a thousand years. With a strenuous effort he renounced his sensual life and restoring youth to Pūru, and appointing him as his successor, he left for a forest to lead a pious and meditating life.

Nahuṣa—He was Āyus' son, Purūravas' grandson, and Yayāti's father. He was a very wise and powerful king. For some time, he deputed Indra at latter's request. He made the Seven Sages to carry him in a palanquin to Indrāṇī's house, whose love, he thought, he would win. On his way, he insulted the Sages by ordering them to move on (*sarpa, sarpa*). One of the Sages cursed him to be a *sarpa* (serpent). He fell down on the earth and remained as a serpent, till he was freed by Yudhiṣṭhira from that condition.

O son of Sūta, tell us in detail, as to how the creation (took place) formerly.

Sūta said :

3-5. I shall tell in detail the cause of creation and destruction, merely by hearing which a man would become omniscient. Hiraṇyakaśipu occupied the three worlds. Having propitiated Brahmā by penance, he obtained a boon, difficult to obtain, and also immortality from that noble god. He, having pervaded gods and the worlds secured mastery (over all).

6-9. Then gods with Gandharvas, sages who had mastered the Vedas, and Nāgas, Kinnaras, Siddhas, Yakṣas and others, led by Brahmā, went to lord Nārāyaṇa, who was enjoying his sleep at the end of a Yuga in the Milky Ocean. With the palms of their hands joined, the gods awakened him with (i.e. by singing) hymns of praise. When the lord of the gods awoke, O you very wise one(s), they told him the account of that wicked one (i.e. Hiraṇyakaśipu). Having heard it, the lord of the world, resorting to the form of Nṛsiṁha, killed Hiraṇyakaśipu.

10-15. Then with the Boar-form he killed the very powerful Hiraṇyākṣa. He lifted up the auspicious Earth, and killed that demon at that time. He also killed other fierce-looking demons. When thus the great demons had perished, when the others i.e. Diti's sons had (also) perished, when the gods had attained great positions, when sacrifices and other religious rites had proceeded (i.e. were being performed), when all the worlds had well-settled, that Diti who was oppressed by grief, who was tormented by the bereavement of her sons, who cried 'alas, alas,', and had become senseless, devoutly saluted her husband Kaśyapa who resembled the sun, who was endowed with the lustre of penance, who was a donor and was magnanimous, and said to that very intelligent best brāhmaṇa:

16-20. "O revered sir, that god—the holder of the disc—has made me sonless. Gods have struck down all the sons of Diti (i.e. of me) and of Danu. O best sage, I am burnt by the fire of grief (due to the loss) of my sons. O lord, give me a son, who would delight (everyone), who would remove the lustre of all, who would be very powerful and charming in all limbs, who would be lustrous like the king of gods, who would be very

intelligent and omniscient, who would be learned and wise, who would be endowed with the lustre of penance, who would be strong and would have auspicious marks, who would be well-versed in the Vedas, who would be knowing (i.e. possessing knowledge), who would honour gods and brāhmaṇas, who would be the conqueror of all worlds, and, who would, O brāhmaṇa, give me joy, and who would, O lord, be endowed with all (good) characteristics."

21-23a. Having heard these excellent words of her, the noble Kaśyapa with his mind full of pity and pleased with her who was grieved, who was helpless and whose mind had become distressed, and having put his hand through great love for her, on her head, said to her: "O glorious one, a son, as desired by you, will be (born to you)."

23b-28. Having said so, he went to Meru, the best mountain. He of a great vow, all alone practised great penance (there). In the meanwhile, she conceived an excellent embryo. That high-minded Diti, knowing all rules of conduct, doing good deeds, remained with a pure heart for a period of hundred years. She gave birth to a son who was endowed with Brāhmaṇic lustre. Then Kaśyapa, full of great joy, came there; (and) the best and intelligent one named him. He called his son 'Bala', who, the great one, was like (i.e. true to) his name. Thus he named him, and performed his thread-ceremony. He said to him : "O (my) glorious son, practise celibacy."

29. (Bala said) : "O best brāhmaṇa, I shall just do as you tell me. O best one, with (i.e. practising) celibacy, I would study the Vedas."

30-31. Thus an entire century of years passed while he was practising penance. He, endowed with the lustre of penance, came to the presence of (i.e. came to) his mother. Diti, full of great joy saw the divine celibacy, full of the power of penance, of her magnanimous son.

32-35. She said to that son (of her) viz. Bala, who was magnanimous, who was possessed of penance, who was intelligent, who was great-souled, who was well-versed in judgement and knowledge : "O intelligent one, as long as you live, my sons like Hiraṇyakaśipu killed by him who holds a disc in his hand (i.e. by Viṣṇu), will live onward. O my boy, conclude the hostility

(i.e. take revenge), kill in battle (our) enemies—the gods." That Danu said to that very powerful Bala these words: "Son, first quickly kill Indra, the lord of gods. Then strike down gods, and after that (strike down) him, whose vehicle is Garuḍa (i.e. Viṣṇu)."

36. Having heard (the words) of the two (i.e. Diti and Danu), Aditi, who looked upon her husband as a god, and who was full of great grief, said to her son, Indra :

37-38a. "Diti's son, of a huge body, is increasing with brāhmaṇic lustre. For killing gods, he practised penance in (honour of) Śiva. Understand like this, O lord of gods, if you desire happiness here."

38b-39. Having thus heard those words of his mother, Indra, the lord of gods, was extremely worried due to uneasiness. Being tormented by great grief, he then thought:

40-45. 'How shall I kill this (Bala) who is polluting the piety of gods?' Thus the lord of gods decided to kill Bala. Once that Bala resorted (i.e. went) to the ocean to offer his daily prayers. He shone with a divine skin of an antelop and a piece of stick, and with spotless merit and that (i.e. undescribable) celibacy. Indra saw him seated upon the seat meant for daily prayers, near the ocean, muttering prayers and extremely tranquil. That Diti's son was hit (by Indra) with that divine thunderbolt. Seeing Bala fallen dead on the ground, the king of gods full of great joy was then delighted. The pious Indra, having thus struck down that demon, Diti's son, ruled happily.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

Vṛtra Duped

Sūta said :

1-2. Having heard that her very powerful son Bala was killed, Diti piteously wept saying: "Oh, I am facing a great misery." Having thus very piteously wept for a long time, the

miserable, glorious one went to Kaśyapa, her husband, and said to him :

3-4a. "Seeing your son who had gone to the ocean, the very sinful Indra, the lord of the host of gods, with his thunderbolt killed him having the characteristics of a brāhmaṇa and just practising *sandhyā* (i.e. the daily prayer)."

4b-5. Having heard thus, (Kaśyapa) Marīci's son got angry at that time, and was full of great anger, as it were, burnt with fire. The best brāhmaṇa plucked a hair from his matted hair, (and putting it into) pure fire (said:)

6-10a. "I shall create a son just for killing Indra." From that fire-pool, from the mouth of fire was produced a fierce figure, full of black collyrium (i.e. very dark), and tawny-eyed, with the interior of his mouth fearful on account of the fangs, causing fear to the worlds, capable of giving a big blow with the flat of his hand, holding a sword and a shield, bright with lustre of the entire body, resembling a large cloud and strong. He said to the brāhmaṇa viz. Kaśyapa: "Give me an order. O brāhmaṇa, tell me the purpose for which I was produced; I shall accomplish it through your favour, O you of a good vow."

Kaśyapa said :

10b-11. O you highly intelligent one, fulfil the desire of this Aditi (Diti?) and of me also. Kill the wicked Indra; and when that king of gods (i.e. Indra) is killed, enjoy Indra's position.

12-14. Thus ordered by that noble Kaśyapa, Vṛtra exerted to kill Indra. Endowed with valour, he practised archery. The thousand-eyed one (i.e. Indra), seeing the demon's strength, power and his lustre with courage befitting a kṣatriya, was afflicted by fear. He thought of a means to kill that wicked Vṛtra.

15-16. Having called the Seven Great Sages, the god of gods sent them to Vṛtra, the lord of demons: "O best sages, you may please go (to the place) where Vṛtra is staying, and bring about a treaty between them (i.e. the demons and me)."

17. Thus ordered and urged by that thousand-eyed (Indra) the Seven Sages then said to that demon Vṛtra:

18-21a. "Indra offers to make friendship (with you), O best demon; make that friendship." The Seven Sages, knowing the fact, said to the very powerful Vṛtra: "O best one, the very wise Indra desires your friendship. Then how is it that you do not do it (i.e. do not accept his offer)? O hero, enjoy happily half the position (i.e. kingdom) of Indra; let Indra have the (remaining) half. Giving up their enmity, let all demons and gods live happily."

Vṛtra said :

21b-23a. If the best lord of the gods really desires friendship, I (too) shall do (the same) by resorting to truth (i.e. truthfully); there is no doubt about this. O brāhmaṇas, if, by putting forward (i.e. by resorting to) dishonesty, Indra plays mischief, then what is the surety in this matter?

23b-24a. The sages said to Indra : "Give certainty about this. Tell us the truth if you desire friendship here (with Vṛtra)."

Indra said :

24b-25a. If I behave with you falsely and dishonestly, then I shall be stained with the sins of killing brāhmaṇas etc. There is no doubt about it.

25b-27a. The very powerful (brāhmaṇas) again spoke to Vṛtra, the lord of demons: " 'I shall be stained with the sins of killing brāhmaṇas etc. There is no doubt about it.' Thus, O very wise one, Indra has said to you. O you very intelligent one, form friendship (with Indra), with this (i.e. taking those words to be the) surety."

Vṛtra said :

27b-28a. O best brāhmaṇas, on account of your respectable manner and this truthfulness of him, I shall likewise form friendship with him.

28b-33. The chief brāhmaṇas took Vṛtra into the vicinity of Indra. Seeing Vṛtra, ready for friendship, having arrived, the pious Indra got up from his seat, and taking the material of worship quickly, offered (the same) to Vṛtra: "O very wise one,

enjoy half of this great position of Indra. O best of demons, we two should stay happily." O best brāhmaṇa, having thus produced confidence through friendship of Vṛtra, the wicked-minded one always saw his weak point. Vṛtra too was always cautious. Indra also would think day and night (to find out his weak point). He did not find out the weak point of the noble Vṛtra.

34-43a. He thought of a stratagem to kill him. He sent Rambhā (after telling her:) "With this or that trick, delude the great demon. O auspicious one, do that to delude the great demon, so that by killing him I shall get happiness." (Rambhā resorted to Nandanavana—Indra's garden,) the garden which was auspicious, very divine, resorted to by pious trees, full of many trees with fruits, full of beasts and birds, looking beautiful all around with divine heavenly cars, always full of divine music of the Gandharvas and bees, full of auspicious, sweet and prolonged cooings of cuckoos everywhere, full of the notes of peacocks and the sounds of antelopes at every place, everywhere adorned with divine sandal trees and also with charming wells, pools and lakes full of water and lotuses in bloom; it looked beautiful with gods, Gandharvas, Siddhas and Kinnaras as well; also with divine sages and with an excellent garden. It was crowded with hosts of celestial nymphs; and with various curious and auspicious objects. It was thronged with golden palaces, and was everywhere adorned with staffs, umbrellas and chowries, and with pitchers and banners. It was full of the sounds (of the recitation) of the Vedas and with the sounds of songs.

43b-44a. Reaching the Nandana like this, that sportive Rambhā, smiling charmingly sported there with celestial nymphs.

Sūta said :

44b-51. Once that Vṛtra, dragged by death, went very joyfully with some demons, to that forest. The lord of gods and brāhmaṇas, looking for his weak point, moved unnoticed by the side of that noble one. That very wise Vṛtra, confiding (in Indra) in all matters, and knowing Indra to be a great friend, was not afraid of him. Moving (i.e. he moved) in the great auspicious forest. The forest was very charming and (full of) curious objects and crowded with bevies of women. That glorious and noble Rambhā, of large eyes, who had resorted to the cool and very

auspicious shade of a sandal-tree, was seated on a swing and was playing dice with her friends. She (also) sang a melodious song, infatuating the entire universe. Vṛtra, having come there, saw that Rambhā, with charming, large eyes with his mind full of sexual desire.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

The Killing of Demon Vṛtra

Sūta said :

1. (Vṛtra thought:) 'Who is this woman with charming eyes, singing in graceful modes? This attractive woman shines all round. She would delude people with full emotions.'

2-3. Seeing that Rambhā, of large eyes like lotuses, of plump breasts, with her body smeared with sandal, with her face resembling a lotus, (he thought) 'Is she the abode of my sexual desire or is she charming and attractive Rati ? Sent here only by Cupid, I shall certainly approach her, who is full of emotion, endowed with good form, disposed to sex, and of an extremely good disposition.'

4. Thus the demon, very much distressed, full of great anxiety, deluded by sexual desire, prompted (like this) for a long time, went there quickly, and with his mind afflicted said to her, whose eyes were charming:

5. "O beautiful lady, whom do you belong to? By whom are you sent (here)? Tell me what your most auspicious name is. By your extremely lustrous beauty I am infatuated. O you young lady, come under my influence."

6-7. Thus addressed (by Vṛtra), the large-eyed one (said to him:) "O noble one, I am Rambhā; I have come to this excellent forest, Nandana, with my friends, to sport. But who are you? Why have you come to me?".

Vṛtra said :

8-10. Listen, I shall tell you who I am that have come here, O young lady. O you auspicious one, I am Kaśyapa's son, born

from fire. O you of a beautiful face, I am also the friend of Indra, the lord of gods. I am enjoying half the portion (i.e. the kingdom) of Indra. I am Vṛtra, O you respectable lady; how do you not recognise me, under whose control have come all the three worlds, O you of an excellent complexion?

11. O you beautiful lady, I have sought your shelter. Protect me from the (disturbance caused by) sexual desire. O you of large eyes, resort to me, who am, O dear one, distressed by sexual desire.

Rambhā said :

12. There is no doubt that today I shall submit myself to you; O hero, you should do whatever I tell you to do.

(He said:)

13a. "O you noble one, let it be so; I shall do all that (you will tell me to do)."

13b-14a. Having thus established a relation with her, the very powerful best demon enjoyed in that very meritorious forest.

14b-15. The great demon was very much stupefied by her singing, dancing, charming smile and sexual intercourse (with her). She said to that noble and best demon:

16a. "(Please) drink wine; (please) drink madhu-mādhavī (a kind of intoxicating drink)."

16b. He said to that Rambhā of large eyes and of a moon-like face:

17. "O good lady, I am a brāhmaṇa's son, who has mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. How shall I drink wine (an act) that is condemned?"

18-20. But that respectable lady Rambhā lovingly gave wine to him against his will. Due to civility for her he drank wine at that time. When he was extremely stupefied by the wine, and lost his senses, just then Indra struck him with his thunderbolt. Then that killer of Vṛtra (i.e. Indra) was tainted with such sins as killing a brāhmaṇa. Then the brāhmaṇas said: "O Indra, you have committed a sin.

21. That very powerful Vṛtra relied on (you) due to our words (i.e. because we told him). You have killed him through (falsifying that) reliance on you."

Indra said :

22-24. An enemy should always be killed by this or that means. You are angry because the wicked demon, the lord of even the three worlds, the killer of gods and brāhmaṇas, the enemy of sacrifices and righteousness is killed. Is it a sign of justice? O best brāhmaṇas, first think (properly), then you may be angry if you think my injustice (i.e. if you think I have done injustice).

25-26. The brāhmaṇas were thus addressed by Indra. The best ones were also admonished by all gods like Brahmā. When that demon, the enemy of righteousness was killed, they went to their respective abodes.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

The Origin of Maruts

Sūta said :

1-3. O best brāhmaṇas, that Diti, hearing that her son was killed, was afflicted with pain and tormented with grief due to (the death of) her son. She again said to that noble, best sage Kaśyapa: "O best brāhmaṇa, to kill that very wicked Indra, give me, O lord, a son having Brāhmaṇic lustre, strong and unbearable to all deities, if I am very dear to you, O my beloved husband."

Kaśyapa said :

4-5. Wicked god Indra, resorting to sinful ways, killed my very strong sons, Bala and Vṛtra. To kill him only, I shall give (you) one son. O you glorious one, be pure for one hundred years.

6-12. Speaking like this, that best meditating sage, put his hand on her head and he, with her only, went to a penance-grove (on) Meru. Always remaining pure, that respectable lady, living in the penance grove, practised penance for a son, O best brāhmaṇa. Then knowing about the assiduous effort of Diti, that

thousand-eyed god, O noble one, saw her weakness. The god of gods becoming (i.e. turning himself into a youth) twentyfive years old, and resembling a deity went, in the form of a brāhmaṇa, near her. The thousand-eyed righteous one saluted the mother, endowed with penance, and was (thus) addressed by her: "O best brāhmaṇa, who are you?" The thousand-eyed one (i.e. Indra) said to her: "O you beautiful, auspicious lady, I am your son, a brāhmaṇa, knowing the Vedas. I (also) know Dharma. I shall help (you) in your penance. There is no doubt about it." He served that respectable mother, endowed with penance.

13. She did not know him to be Indra, of wicked deeds, that had come there. She looked upon him as her lawful son, serving her everyday.

14-15. He would (first) shampoo the body of that respectable lady, and would then wash her feet. The virtuous one always gave Diti leaves, roots, bark-garments and the skin of an antelope. Pleased with his devotion, she, being delighted, said to him:

16. "O you blessed one, when a very meritorious son will be born (to me), and when Indra will be killed, you rule over the divine kingdom along with my son."

17-20. (Indra said:) "O you fortunate one, let it be so; it will be like that due to your favour." Indra desired to find her weak point only. For ninetynine years he kept on looking for her weak point. (Once) without washing her feet, Diti entered into (i.e. slept on) her bed. She put her head on the border of the bed. She, with her hair loose and being very much perturbed, (tried) to get sleep. Indra entered her side, and with his thunderbolt of a sharp edge, cut the embryo lying in the womb, into seven pieces; it wept.

21-25. O best brāhmaṇas, the very lustrous Indra again and again said to that large embryo, weeping due to being in Indra's hands, "Do not weep". Again Indra cut that embryo born of (i.e. conceived by) Diti into seven parts. That king of gods cut each (portion of the embryo) that was weeping. In this way the Maruts of great prowess were born. Since they were (thus) addressed by Indra (*mā rodiḥ*) they got this name. The Maruts, of great vigour and huge bodies, of sharp lustre and valour, were fortynine (in number). They were known as Maruts and attended on Indra only.

26-28.* They illumine the great host of all beings. Hari, the lord of beings, successively gave in (various) habitations, kingdoms (to kings) preceded by Pṛthu. That supreme spirit Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), who pervades everything, who is the lord of the world, who is triumphant with penance, who has great lustre is all alone the lord of the beings.

29-32. O best brāhmaṇa, to him who knows correctly, belongs merit, and this immobile and mobile world, this creation of beings. He has no fear of again being born here (i.e. in this world); then wherefrom can he have fear in the next world? That man, who devoutly listens to this meritorious, auspicious (account of) the creation that removes all sins, is free from all sins. He is blessed, he is meritorious and is endowed with truth. He, who listens to (this account of) creation, gets the highest position. With his heart cleared of all sins, he goes to Viṣṇu's world.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

Coronation of the Kings

Sūta said:

1-3a. That lord, Brahmā, the master of all worlds, having then consecrated on the entire kingdom (i.e. as the king of all the kingdom) that great lord, king Pṛthu, Vena's son, of large arms and a huge body, and resembling Indra, the lord of gods, and taking into account (other) kingdoms one by one, proceeded to give each one that kingdom, which he deserved.

3b-4. The highly intelligent one consecrated Soma (i.e. the Moon) as the king of the trees, brāhmaṇas, of planets and stars, of all pious acts, of religiously conducted sacrifices, of merits and of those of an auspicious lustre.

5-8a. O best brāhmaṇa, having consecrated Varuṇa (as the chief) among the waters and of places sacred to deities and of gems, and Vaiśravaṇa as the king of all other Yakṣas, the grandsire appointed Viṣṇu on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of

*The relevance of these lines is not clear. They seem to have been inserted in wrong place. (Ed.)

Ādityas, for the good of the people, O you very intelligent one. He appointed the capable Dakṣa, conversant with all religious practices, the chief of the attendants of the lord of the beings, as the chief of all auspicious objects.

8b-15. He appointed Prahrāda, knowing all religious practices, on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of the sons of Diti and Danu. He consecrated Yama, the son of Vivasvān, on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of the dead ancestors, and (appointed) Śiva, having the trident in his hand, (as the king) of the Yakṣas, demons, ghosts, goblins, reptiles, of all female meditating sages, of magnanimous vampires, and also of all skeletons and spirits, and of all kings. (He appointed) the great mountain Himālaya (as the king) of all mountains. The lord of gods appointed the auspicious ocean, the best sacred place of all, on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of rivers, lakes, small wells, of pools, and wells and other divine (sacred places). Then Brahmā, the lord of gods, consecrated Citraratha on the auspicious kingdom (i.e. as the king) of all the Gandharvas. Then the four-faced god (i.e. Brahmā) consecrated Vāsuki on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of the snakes (nāgas) of auspicious vigour and Takṣaka (as the king) of the serpents (sarpas).

16-18. In the same way, he consecrated Airāvaṇa on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of the elephants, and Uccaiḥśravas (as the king of) all the horses, and (Garuḍa) the son of Vinatā (as the king) of all the birds. He then appointed the lion on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of all the beasts. The lord of beings consecrated an excellent bull (as the chief) of the bulls. The grandsire (appointed) the Indian fig-tree (as the king) of trees.

19. In this way the grandsire Brahmā, the best one, having founded all the kingdoms, appointed the regents of the quarters.

20-27. The best one consecrated Sudhanvan, Vairāja's son, as the regent —as the king— in (i.e. of) the eastern quarter. He consecrated the noble Śaṅkhapada, son of Kardama Prajāpati, as the king of the southern quarter. Similarly Brahmā, the lord of beings, consecrated the son of Varuṇa Prajāpati, named Puṣkara, in (i.e. as the chief of) the western quarter. In (i.e. as the regent of) the northern quarter, Brahmā consecrated Nalakūbara. Thus he consecrated the very powerful regents of the quarters, by whom even now the earth with the seven islands and (many)

cities, is righteously protected according to (i.e. in) the regions (assigned to them). That illustrious Pṛthu also was consecrated as the king in accordance with the rites as seen (i.e. mentioned) in the Vedas and with all great sacrifices like the Rājasūya, in the pious period of Manu[1] called Cākṣuṣa, which has gone by, which had great splendour and which led to the good of gods and the righteous, O you illustrious one. Then he gave the kingdom to Vaisasvata Manu.

28-31. O best among the brāhmaṇas, if you desire to listen carefully, I shall also tell you the minute details about the magnanimous Pṛthu. This is the basis (*adhiṣṭhāna*?) (which is) said to be very meritorious. This (alone) is always determined (i.e. definitely told) in all the Purāṇas. That man, who, devoutly and with rapt attention, listens to this (account), which is meritorious, which leads to fame, gives long life, and an auspicious stay in heaven, which is blessed, pure, causing longevity, which bestows sons and prosperity, enjoys the fruit of (performing) the horse-sacrifice. There is no doubt about this.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

The Story of Pṛthu

The sages said:

1-7. O noble one, (please) tell us in detail (about) the birth of that magnanimous Pṛthu. We desire to hear it. (Tell us) how that noble king formerly milked this cow (i.e. the earth); how gods, manes, sages knowing the truth, demons, serpents, Yakṣas, trees and mountains, goblins and Gandharvas, brāhmaṇas doing auspicious acts, and how other magnanimous ones (did so). O you highly intelligent one, tell us especially how they held the pot of milk and the manner in which she was milked.

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1. Manvantara—the period or age of Manu. This period comprises 4320000 human years or 1/14th day of Brahmā, the fourteen Manvantaras making up one whole day.

O Sūta's son, tell us why formerly the very meritorious and angry sages churned the hand even of that noble king Vena. This is a strange account which destroys all sins. We are desirous of hearing it; O noble one, (it is so interesting that) we are not at all content with (i.e. even though we hear) it.

Sūta said :

8-10a. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall tell you in detail about king Pṛthu's—Vena's son's—birth, power, his wife, also about the entire life of the intelligent (king). O noble and best brāhmaṇas, desire to hear it (i.e. listen to it).

10b-11. This account should not be narrated to one who is not a devotee, to one who is faithless, to a cheat, to a great fool, to one who is greatly deluded, to a bad disciple, to one who is void of faith, to one who is untruthful; do not narrate it to one who destroys everything.

12-13. He who recites it in a different way, goes to hell. You are full of devotion, and are intent upon behaving truthfully. In front of you (i.e. to you) I shall fully narrate the whole account that removes sins. O best brāhmaṇas, (please) listen.

14-17. O excellent brāhmaṇas, I shall tell you the secret, which leads (one) to heaven, to fame, which causes longevity, which is excellent, which is accepted by the Vedas and which is told by the sages. He, who, after saluting the brāhmaṇas, always narrates in detail this (account) of Pṛthu, the son of Vena, would never lament over what he has done and not done. The sin earned by him during seven births, perishes by just hearing it. A brāhmaṇa would know (the meaning of) the Vedas, a kṣatriya would be victorious, a vaiśya would be prosperous with wealth, and a śūdra would get happiness. One thus gets the fruit by reciting or listening to it.

18-26a. The biography of Pṛthu is pure and it removes sins. Formerly there was a Prajāpati, Aṅga by name, born in Atri's family and a lord resembling Atri. He preserved piety, was very intelligent and well-versed in the meaning of the Vedas and (other) branches of knowledge. His son was Vena, a lord of beings. Abandoning righteousness, he always proceeded (in all his acts). Mṛtyu had a highly virtuous daughter by name

Sunīthā. The noble Aṅga married that Sunīthā. On her he begot Vena, the destroyer of righteousness. Due to the blemishes of his maternal grandfather, Vena the son of the daughter of Kāla, gave up his own way of righteousness and became fondly attached to wickedness. Due to (sexual) desire, greed and infatuation he practised sin only. The lord of men gave up the virtuous practices as told in the Vedas, and being deluded by pride and jealousy, behaved sinfully. People at that time lived without Vedic studies. When he was the lord of the subjects, they were without the Vedic studies and Vaṣaṭkāra (i.e. they did not study the Vedas and did not offer oblations). Deities did not drink Soma that proceeded and was offered at sacrifices.

26b-30. The wicked one always said to the brāhmaṇas: "You should not study (the Vedas); you should not make offering into the fire. You should not give gifts; you should not perform sacrifices and should not make offerings into fire." When destruction was imminent, this was the declaration of that king. Again and again (he told): "Sacrifices are to be offered to me. I am the sacrificer as well as the sacrifice." (He) also (told them:) "Sacrifices should be offered to me; offerings should be made to me." Thus Vena always spoke. (He also said:) "I am the eternal Viṣṇu. I am Brahmā, I am Rudra, I am Indra. I am the wind. I am the enjoyer. I am the oblations offered to the deities and manes. There is no doubt about this."

31. Then all the very powerful sages, who got angry, got together and said to the king of a wicked mind:

The sages said :

32. The king is surely the lord of the earth (and) he always protects the subjects. The emperor is the image of righteousness, therefore he should protect it.

33. We are entering upon an initiation for a twelve-year sacrifice. Do not play a mischief with the sacrifice. Righteousness is the way of the good.

34. O great king, practise righteousness; practise truthfulness and merit. You have made an agreement that you would protect the subjects.

35. Vena, of a wicked mind, laughed and said this nonsensical thing to the sages, who were speaking like that:

Vena said :

36. Who else (but me) is the creator of Dharma (i.e. religious practices)? Whom else should I listen to? Who, on the earth, is like me in (point of) learning, power, penance or truth?

37. I am the source of all beings and especially of religious practices. You, who are confounded and ignorant do not know me.

38. If I desire, I would burn the earth or would inundate it with water. I would block up the heaven and the earth. There should be no discussion about this matter.

39-45a. O king, when they could not dissuade Vena from his infatuation and pride, the angry great sages, forcibly seized him with rage, and churned the left thigh of his, who was trembling with anger. The magnanimous ones saw (there a being) that was possessed of (=like) a heap of black collyrium, that was very short and strange, that had a long face and deformed eyes, that was bright due to an armour, that had a protruded belly and broad ears, that was very much frightened and that was a gamester. They then said to him, "sit down". Hearing those words of theirs, he, being distressed with fear, sat down. His race was settled in mountains and forests. (They are) the Niṣādas, the Kirātas, the Bhillas, the Nāhalakas, the Bhramaras, the Pulindas and those that belong to the other Mleccha species. From that part (i.e. left thigh) all those sinful ones were produced.

45b-52a. Then all the sages, with their minds pleased, (found) Vena, the best king, to be without a blemish. They churned the right hand of that magnanimous one only. When his hand was (thus) churned, sweat was produced. The sages again churned the right hand only. From that excellent hand a man was produced. He resembled twelve suns; the complexion of his body was like heated gold; he was covered with (i.e. he had put on) divine flowers; his body was shining due to divine ornaments; he had besmeared divine sandal on his body. He shone with a crown resembling the sun in colour (i.e. brilliance) and with a pair of ear-rings. His body was huge, his arms were large, he was matchless in form; the great lord had held a sword and arrows, a bow and had put on an armour. The highly intelligent one was endowed with all (auspicious) marks, and was decorated with all ornaments, and with a lustrous form and had a

good complexion. The son of Vena was (i.e. shone) on the earth as Indra in heaven.

52b-53. When that magnanimous one was born, gods and spotless sages celebrated a festival to (i.e. in honour of) the son of Vena. With his body he was evidently bright like fire.

54-55. When, holding the first Ājagava bow (i.e. Śiva's bow) which was excellent, and divine arrows and a very bright armour for protection, the magnanimous and noble hero Pṛthu, was born, all the beings were happy, O best brāhmaṇa.

56-59. To consecrate him (with their water), all the best brāhmaṇas proceeded to all sacred places and various auspicious (places of) water. O best brāhmaṇa, gods led by the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā), various beings, the immobile and the mobile consecrated that king, the great hero, the protector of the subjects, viz. Pṛthu. That son of Vena, noble and brave, being approached by the mobile and the immobile, by all gods and brāhmaṇas, was consecrated by them as the emperor of (all) kings.

60-63. His father had never pleased his subjects; (but) pleased by him, they were very happy. The term Rājan (i.e. king) came about (i.e. was coined) because of the hero's pleasing (his subjects). Due to the fear of that magnanimous one, the entire water of the ocean stood still when the great hero approached the ocean. Cutting off difficult passage, the mountains offered easy passage. All those mountains never insulted his flag. Crops grew in unploughed land, and everywhere cows gave milk as desired (by those who milked them).

64. Rain(-fall) was as (much as) desired. All brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and others performed Vedic sacrifices and celebrated great festivals.

65. When that king was ruling, all trees bore fruits as desired, there was no famine, no disease and no untimely death of men.

66. When that un-assailable, noble king of kings was ruling, all people, intent on following religious practices, lived happily.

67. At this time only, (i.e. from) the auspicious sacrifice of the grandsire, on a grand, pleasing day, Sūta was born of Sūti.

68. In (i.e. from) the same sacrifice the wise Māgadha was also born. By the great sages the two were invited there for praising Pṛthu.

69. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall narrate the characteristics of Sūta: He is endowed with a lock of hair on the crown of his head and a sacred thread; he is devoted to Vedic studies.

70-73. He knows the meaning of all the sacred books; he maintains the sacred fire; he is endowed with (i.e. he gives) gifts and study; he is intent upon Brāhmaṇic practices. He is always engaged in worshipping gods and brāhmaṇas. He is a sacrificer and would perform sacrifices to the accompaniment of Vedic hymns. He was always intent upon Brāhmaṇic practices and always had friendship with brāhmaṇas. Māgadha was born like this (but was) without studies. All those bandins and cāraṇas should be known to be (i.e. were) magnanimous and were without Brāhmaṇic practices, and predominated as bards.

74-78a. Both the skilful Sūta and Māgadha were created for eulogising; all the sages said to them: "Praise this king; and also the deeds worthy of him, and (narrate) also how the king is." The Bandin (i.e. the Sūta) and Māgadha said to all the sages: "We two shall please all the gods and sages with our deeds; but we do not know his deeds, and also his characteristics and his glory. O best brāhmaṇas, we do not know that deed of this magnanimous (king) with which (i.e. taking which into consideration) we would praise him. This best king, whose merits are not known (to us), would be praised with (i.e. with reference to) his future auspicious qualities."

78b-86. All the sages told (them) the deeds which that very glorious Pṛthu performed, (and also) all the divine virtues of that magnanimous one. (The sages said:) "He (will be) truthful, endowed with knowledge, intelligent and of well-known valour; he (will) always (be) brave, (will) appreciate merits, (will be) meritorious, truth-speaking, and the best performer of sacrifices. He (will) speak pleasing words, (will) speak the truth, (will) have grains and wealth, (will) know and appreciate (others') merits, (will) know what is right, and (will) love truth, (will) be omnipresent, omniscient, friendly to brāhmaṇas, knower of the Vedas, and very intelligent. He (will) be wise, (will) have a sweet voice, and (will) master the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He will support and protect (his) subjects; he (will) be victorious on the battle-field. The best king will perform sacrifices like the Rājasūya, and is the only one on the earth who is endowed with

all virtuous practices. The magnanimous one will possess these qualities." The two, viz. Sūta and Māgadha, were appointed by the sages to sing the praises of that magnanimous one with (reference to) the future qualities (i.e. qualities he will possess). O highly intelligent one, since then people are delighted with eulogies, and hereafter also the donors will be pleased with excellent praises.

87-93. Since then, O best brāhmaṇas, blessings are employed (i.e. included) in eulogies; and they (who sing praises) get excellent (i.e. abundant) wealth. The noble Pṛthu, out of graciousness, gave Sūta, Māgadha and Bandin, the prosperous and excellent country, viz. Tailaṅga, and also the Haihaya country. Having established a city named after himself on the bank of the Revā, he, performing sacrifices, formerly gave (gifts) to brāhmaṇas, O best brāhmaṇa. All the subjects, and also the sages of pure penance saw the best man, who was omniscient, gave all gifts, and whose strength lay in piousness. The meritorious ones said to one another: "He will give livelihood to gods and especially to us. He will protect the subjects and maintain them." O you very wise ones, it is said that formerly this earth became stable after the seed sown (in it) was eaten by the created beings for living.

94-98. Then the subjects ran to Pṛthu. Having heard (i.e. he heard) the words of the sages, 'Give us a good livelihood'. The Earth, having consumed all (kinds of) food, became very stable. The best king, seeing the very great fear of the subjects, and also by the word of the great sages, took his bow with an arrow, and the angry king speedily ran to the Earth. The Earth, through his fear, took up the form of an elephant, and concealing herself, moved through forests and inaccessible places. The very wise one did (i.e. could) not see (her in) the form of an elephant.

99-101. Then the king ran after her in the form of an elephant. Being struck by him with sharp arrows, she, taking up a lion's form, became wholly occupied in running. The king, observing that (Earth in a) lion's form, ran towards (i.e. after) her. That very wise one, who was extremely angry, and whose charming eyes were red due to anger, struck the Earth with whetted and sharp excellent arrows.

102. Struck with the arrows, she (i.e. the Earth) was

afflicted and alarmed. Taking up the form of a buffalo she became intent on fleeing.

103-120. The archer (i.e. Pṛthu), with an arrow in his hand, ran fast (after her). O you best brāhmaṇas, she became (i.e. turned herself into) a cow and verily went to heaven. She sought the shelter of Brahmā and of the noble Viṣṇu also. She did (i.e. could) not secure the refuge of gods like Rudra. Not getting a great (i.e. good) protection, she regarded Vena's son only (as her refuge). Afflicted with (the injury caused by) the stroke of the arrow, she came to his side (i.e. to him). With her hands joined in humble entreaty, she spoke (these) words to Pṛthu. She said to the king: "O king of kings, protect me, protect me. O magnanimous one, I am mother Earth, the support of all. O king, when I am killed, (all) the seven worlds are destroyed. I am always to be worshipped by the three worlds, with the palms of their hands joined in obeisance." She also said to the king: "O king, a woman is always exempt from death (i.e. is never to be killed). The best brāhmaṇas have considered killing a woman to be a great sin. The best brāhmaṇas have also considered killing a cow to be a great sin. O great king how will you support the subjects without me? O king, when I am stable, then (only) the mobile and immobile worlds become stable. These mobile and immobile worlds will perish without me. When I perish, the beings will perish. O king, how will you support your subjects without me? The people are steady on me, the world is supported by me. There is no doubt that when I perish all the beings will perish. If you desire bliss, then (please) do not destroy me. O lord of beings, O king, listen to my words. Undertakings become highly successful through efforts, O noble one. Properly consider that effort by which you will support (your) subjects. O you very wise great king, by destroying me, i.e. without me, how will you always support, maintain, nourish and hold in your possession these subjects? Control your anger. I shall be full of food and will support these subjects. As a woman I am not to be killed; (if you kill me) you will have to atone (for having killed me). They say that a female, even of the lower species, is not to be killed. Considering in this way, you should not give up your proper conduct." Thus the earth spoke many words

to the king: "O great king, give up this terrible wrath. O king of kings, if you are pleased then (only) I shall be happy."

121. Thus addressed by her, king Pṛthu, the lord of subjects and the son of Vena, said (these words) to the noble Earth, O best brāhmaṇas:

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

The Story of Pṛthu (Contd.)

Pṛthu said :

1-13a. If a very sinful one is killed, O you of sinful conduct, good people rich in merit live happily. Therefore one that is most sinful and of a wicked mind should be killed. Now you have suppressed all seeds by devouring them. Where will you go by being stable after having destroyed the beings? When a sinful one of a bad conduct is killed, the good live happily. Therefore sin should be destroyed; this is the truth; there is no doubt about it. That from which merit proceeds, should be carefully preserved. You have committed a great sin causing the destruction of the beings. He who for himself or for someone else kills one who torments the world, does not incur sin. O auspicious Earth, when many people become happy by a wicked one having been killed, there is neither a (major) sin nor a minor sin. There is no doubt that (i.e. certainly) I shall kill you. If, O Earth, for the good of this world (i.e. these beings), you do not act according to these meritorious and good words of (i.e. uttered by) me, I shall kill you with sharp arrows, if you are averse to my words. There is no doubt that I shall sustain, by means of my lustre and merit, the virtuous beings living in the three worlds. Accepting my meritorious rule, and obeying my order always rejuvenate these beings, O Earth. If, O you good one, you today obey this order of mine, then I shall be pleased with you, and will always protect you, and also other best kings (will protect you); there is no doubt about this.

13b-14a. That Earth, in the form of a cow, with her body adorned (i.e. covered) with arrows, said these (words) to the highly intelligent Pṛthu, Vena's son, who was the support of righteousness:

The Earth said :

14b-18. O great king, I shall carry out your order, full of truth and merit, for the well-being of the beings; there is no doubt about it. O best king, enterprises and meritorious undertakings become successful by means of exertion and resourcefulness. O king of kings, find out a means by which you would be upright. Support all the subjects in such a way that you make all of them prosperous. Your stone-like (i.e. hard) and sharp arrows have stuck to my body. O king, you yourself extract them. They very much prick me. Make me (turned into) such (a shape) that the water would remain on me.

Sūta said :

19-24. Extracting those big and stone(-like arrows)of various forms with the end of his bow, he made the Earth even. Since then, O best brāhmaṇas, those stones grew in size. The son of king Vena, with pleased mind, having extracted his arrows from her body, made even the ditches and the caves with the strokes of his arrows. Thus, he, prospering with merit, made even the entire Earth. Having made her even, and having thought repeatedly, the noble one made Svāyambhuva Manu as the first calf. O best ones, during the Manu-periods that had passed, the Earth had become uneven; and there was no path anywhere, O best brāhmaṇas, even and uneven portions were naturally there.

25-32a. When the first period of Cākṣuṣa Manu arrived, and when the first creation came up, and when the surface of the Earth was uneven, the boundries of villages, cities, towns, countries, and fields that were seized (*kṣetrapannānām?*) were not noticed. There was no agriculture, no trade and no cow-keeping. No one told lies; there was neither greed nor jealousy. It is said that nobody ever entertained pride or committed sin. O best brāhmaṇa, when the Vaivasvata period came, the beings were

born even before the birth of Vena's son. All these beings desired to have an abode. All the beings, through their merit, lived at some places on the ground, or on a mountain, or on the banks of rivers, or in bowers, or at all sacred places, or on the sea-beaches. Fruits, roots and honey was their food. O best brāhmaṇas, (they got) their food with great difficulty.

32b-43. Having seen the misery of the beings, the king Pṛthu, Vena's son, made Svāyambhuva Manu the calf. O you highly intelligent one, he used his own hand as the vessel. That Pṛthu, the tiger (i.e. the best) among men, then milked the Earth, (and) the milk (was) all the crops and all food of a good quality. Those beings satisfied by means of that auspicious food, resembling nectar, all gods and others (like) the manes. Those beings lived happily by the favour of that son of Vena. O best brāhmaṇas, all the virtuous beings, after offering food first to gods, then to brāhmaṇas and especially to guests, enjoyed food. Some offered oblations in sacrifices, and pleased Viṣṇu only, the lord of gods with the same food. The deities also were satisfied (with the food). Rain sent by Viṣṇu showered. By virtue of that great auspicious trees sprang up. All kinds of crops (grew when) Pṛthu, Vena's son, was the king. Due to that food even now all beings live. The sages also, coming together, milked this Earth. It was again milked by the very blessed sages and the truthful gods. Soma was the calf and the lord of gods himself was the milkman. Energy was the milk, resembling water, by which the gods live. All the beings live due to their truthfulness and merit. They follow truth and merit. (Thus) the Earth was milked by the sages.

44-49. Now I shall narrate how formerly the Earth was milked by the manes and who was made the calf. Making a silver pot and svadhā, with nectar, the milk, and making Yama the calf, Antaka (i.e. Yama) himself became the milkman. O best brāhmaṇas, then the snakes (Nāga) and serpents (Sarpa) milked (the Earth) and (made) Takṣaka the calf. Taking a vessel made of gourd (they collected) the milk i.e. the poison (in it). The valorous Dhṛtarāṣṭra was the milkman for the snakes. O best brāhmaṇas, the matchless serpents and snakes live by that. O best brāhmaṇas, the snakes and the fearful serpents also live by that very poignant poison of a fierce nature,

The fierce, huge-bodied and very powerful ones live by that only. They eat it, move with it; that is their power and valour.

50-59. O best brāhmaṇas, now I shall narrate to you as to how all the demons and the goblins milked the Earth, making, at that time, an iron-pot, and making the milk of the nature of illusion, useful for all purposes, resembling food and destroying all the enemies. The calf of the demons was that powerful Virocana. The priest was Dvimūrdhan, and the very mighty Madhu was the milkman. Due to that illusion, the very strong, very wise, huge-bodied and very lustrous and valorous demons thrive. That is their power; that is their manliness; the demons live by that. O best brāhmaṇas, even now they, of limited intellect, live with that illusion. That is their strength. In the same way the Yakṣas milked the good Earth, the support of all. O best brāhmaṇas, thus we have heard. Formerly the noble ones (milked the Earth) in the former kalpa (when) the milk was of the nature of obscurity (*antardhānamayam*?). The very intelligent Vaiśravaṇa was made the calf; and the milkman of her (i.e. the Earth) was the meritorious, wisest and best among the intelligent viz. Rajatanābha, father of the Yakṣa Maṇibhadra. He was omniscient; he knew all the ways of good conduct; he was the powerful son of the king of Yakṣas; he had eight arms, two heads, and had great lustre and had very great (i.e. severe) penance (to his credit). O best brāhmaṇas, the Yakṣas always stood by him.

60-82. This Earth was again milked by the very strong demons; in the same way she (was milked) by the eager goblins who had consumed water. A human skull—a vessel that came up from a dead body—and one made of iron (were the pots used by them). They of strong anger and valor wanted to enjoy (i.e. to have) good progeny. The very strong Rajatanābha was their milkman, the calf was (one) by name Sumālin, and blood was the milk. The demons, evil spirits, and powerful goblins, Yakṣas and fearful groups of ghosts live by that (milk). Gandharvas and the celestial nymphs, making the learned Citraratha the calf, milked the Earth again. They milked her (milk) full of the music of Gandharvas. O best brāhmaṇas, the very intelligent and most meritorious Gandharva, Suruci, was their milkman. The noble ones milked pure songs as the good milk at that time. The Gandharvas and others (i.e.) the celestial nymphs also live

by that. The auspicious mountains also milked this Earth. They (obtained as milk) various gems and herbs like nectar. The noble Himālaya (mountain) was made the calf. Meru was the milkman, and the pot was made from a big rock. All the very powerful mountains grew (strong) by (drinking) that milk. The great auspicious trees like Kalpa (i.e. the desire-yielding) tree again milked (the Earth). They had brought the pot made of Palāśa tree with its sprouts cut off and burnt. At that time Śāla, of a flowery body milked (the Earth) and Plakṣa was the calf. This (Earth) the supporter of all and the giver of everything was also milked by Guhyakas, Cāraṇas, Siddhas and groups of the Vidyādharas. Whatever the worlds desired with (i.e. by employing) particular vessels and calves, all that she just gave to them, (and) like this (she also gave) them milk with a good mind. This Earth is the supporter, the creator; she is the greatest. She is a cow yielding all desires and is adorned with the auspicious ones. She is the eldest, she is the prop. She is the creation and the beings. She is purifying, she gives merit, she is virtuous, she causes all the crops to grow, she is the supporter and the origin of all the mobile and the immobile. This (Earth) is great fortune, is learning, and is always full of everything. She yields (i.e. satisfies) all desires; she is a cow yielding milk; she causes all seeds to grow. This (Earth), the supporter of all the human race, is the mother (i.e. the origin) of all righteous deeds. She is the light and the form of even the five elements. She was bounded by the ocean and was known as *Medinī*. The entire Earth was submerged with (i.e. in) the marrow (*medas*) of Madhu and Kaiṭabha. Therefore she is called *Medinī* by the expounders of the Vedas. Then, O best ones, due to the arrival of Pṛthu, the wise son of Vena, she became his daughter, and is called *Pṛthivī*. O best brāhmaṇas, that king protected this Earth that is the support of villages and houses, and that is crowned with cities and towns, that has crops and mines, that is bulky and full of all crops, O brāhmaṇas. Thus this goddess Earth is full of all people; (her) prowess like this is mentioned in the Purāṇas.

83-91. The noble Pṛthu, Vena's son, was noted for all (good) deeds. He was like Viṣṇu, like Brahmā (or) like the ancient Rudra. The three gods deserve to be saluted by the expounders of the Vedas led by gods. The best king who is the

founder of the castes and the stages of life, and who supports all the worlds, deserves to be saluted by brāhmaṇas and sages. Also the first, valorous king Pṛthu, Vena's son, deserves to be saluted by noble kings, and by those desiring to be kings. (Pṛthu) who has given livelihood to kings deserves to be saluted by warriors who desire (to master) archery and who always desire victory. O best brāhmaṇas, in this way I have narrated to you the particular vessels, the special properties of calves and of the milkmen in particular. I have also properly told you the speciality of the milk as desired by the king. O best brāhmaṇas, he, who listens to the account of Pṛthu, Vena's son, which is blessed, which leads to glory and good health, which is meritorious and which destroys sins, has (the credit of) a daily bath in the Bhāgīrathī. He, with all his sins purified, goes to Viṣṇu's world.

CHAPTER THIRTY

Sulobha and Śapharahā; Suśaṅkha and Sunithā

The sages said :

1-2. O brāhmaṇa, what was the course of conduct of that sinful Vena, whom you mentioned as behaving sinfully, and what fruit did he get? O you wisest and very intelligent one, tell us in detail the account of that Vena (as it) formerly (took place).

Sūta said :

3-9a. I shall properly tell you the story of that Vena and also the very meritorious account of his noble son, as I have heard it before. When that magnanimous son, Pṛthu, was born, the king (Vena) became spotless and again became religious. All the major sins earned (i.e. committed) by mean persons vanish with their close contact with the sacred places. There is no doubt that merit alone is produced in the company of the good; and sin alone is produced in the company of sinners. Sin would spread around by talking with, seeing, touching, sitting and taking food with and by the company of sinners. In the same way merit alone

would spread in the company of the meritorious. The sinners are purified by their contact with great sacred place (only) and in no other way; and ultimately, with all their sins completely washed, they obtain a holy status.

The sages said :

9b-16a. O best brāhmaṇa, how do the sinners reach the highest attainment ? Tell that in detail; faith is produced (in us).

Sūta said :

There were very sinful hunters, slaves and fishermen, who remained in the water of Revā, Yamunā and Gaṅgā. By chance they knowingly or unknowingly bathed and sported in the water of the great river and obtained the highest position. Casting off their slavish life—the heap of sins—they went to the highest position. Due to their contact with the holy water they all crossed (the ocean of mundane existence). (This was) due to (their) contact with the great river, and not due to contact with other rivers, O best ones. By the contact of a highly meritorious person, and also by seeing and touching him, the sin of even the sinners perishes. No doubt should be raised about this. O brāhmaṇas, in this matter an account, destroying sins, is heard. I shall today tell you that (account) giving great merit.

16b-24a. In a great forest there was a deer-hunter named Sulobha. Greedy of tasting flesh, he everyday killed deer with (the help of) dogs, and with traps and snares. Once that very wicked one, holding a bow and arrows in his hand, being surrounded by dogs went to Vindhya-forest. He killed many beasts, deer and pigs that were frightened. A man, the killer (i.e. hunter) of śaphara (a kind of small glittering fish), resorting to the bank of Revā, and killing many śaphara, came out of the water. Then a female deer, afflicted with fear of that deer-hunter Lobha, and intent upon saving her life, distressed, frightened and with her mind unsettled, fleeing hurriedly, resorted (i.e. came) to the bank of Revā. She that was hurt by the stroke of an arrow, was attacked by dogs. Sulobha, the deer-hunter, pursued her with the speed of wind, and the female deer ran before him. The śaphara-killer, with an arrow in his hand and ready (to strike), bent his bow quickly and checked the female deer.

24b-30. Just then the hunter called Lobha came there with his dogs. "Do not kill her, she is my (game), she has come in the range of my hunt." Hearing (these) words of him (i.e. of Lobha), the wicked and very powerful fish-killer, greedy of flesh, discharged an arrow directed towards her. Struck by the deer-hunter with an arrow, the female deer who was (thus) struck with the two arrows of (i.e. discharged by) the two wicked ones, died there. (Trying) to run away in a hurry, she, being attacked by the dogs, fell from the peak into the Revā-pool that destroyed sins. The dogs also hurrying (to attack her) fell into the sacred pool. Overpowered with anger, the deer-hunter (i.e. Lobha) said to the fisherman: "O wicked one, this female deer is my (game); why did you strike her with arrows?" Then the fish-killer too said to the deer-hunter: "She is my (game); there is no doubt; why are you talking (like this), O proud one (i.e. proudly)."

31-35. Then the two lucky ones, fighting with each other through anger and greed, fell into the sacred water (of Revā). At that time the great parvan, giving a great religious merit and leading to an (excellent) position, viz. Amāvāsyā (i.e. the new-moon day) arrived. All of them, bereft of muttering prayers and meditation and of truthfulness fell (into the water) during the period of the parvan, O best one. On account of the bath of the holy place, the female deer, a dog and the hunter, being freed from all sins, attained the highest position (i.e. went to heaven). O best brāhmaṇa, due to the power of the sacred place and the company of the good, the sin of the sinners would be destroyed as fire would burn fuel.

Sūta said :

36-38. By the company of the noble sages, by talking with them, by seeing and touching them, by the company of the good, formerly the sin of king Vena perished. The sin of sinners perishes by the contact of very great merit (i.e. very meritorious persons). Sin alone would spread by the company of very great sinners. Vena was stained with the sin of his maternal grandfather.

The sages said:

39-44a. Tell us in detail what the fault of the maternal

grandfather was. He is death, he is Kāla (i.e. god of death) and is Yama and Dharma. He does not harm anyone. He is well-settled in his position. All mobile and immobile worlds, influenced by their own deeds, live and die due to their own deeds, and also enjoy due to their own deeds. On the ripening of their deeds, the sinners meet the fierce one. O Sūta, it is this very meritorious Yama, who, everyday would employ or punish (beings), according to their deeds, in all the hells. The pious-minded and righteous one employs (beings) in all very meritorious deeds. No fault of his is observed (in this). Due to what fault of Mṛtyu (i.e. Yama) was that sinful Vena born ?

Sūta said :

44b-56. That Mṛtyu remains in the form of Kāla (i.e. god of death) as the ruler of the wicked-minded. He reflects opon their deeds. He would destroy a person, who has (done) a wicked deed, with (i.e. as a result of) that deed. Knowing his sin this Yama takes him. A righteous soul, through his merit would obtain (i.e. go to) heaven. Mṛtyu alone, through his good messengers, unites all of them (with proper reward). He unites the blessed souls with great happiness, auspicious songs and gifts, and enjoyments. That Mṛtyu, being angry would frighten them only with various kinds of afflictions and distresses and beat them with terrible (clubs) of wood. O noble one, his function remains in (i.e. with reference to) the deeds, and that is due to one's greed of merit. A daughter by name Sunīthā was born to that magnanimous one. Always sporting and observing the deeds of her father, she advised him who observed the good and bad deeds of the subjects. That glorious daughter of him, Sunīthā by name, sporting and surrounded by (her) friends came to a forest. There she saw an excellent distinguished son of a Gandharva, by name Suśaṅkha, with all his body charming, practising penance, and meditating on Sarasvatī, for obtaining great competence in the science of music, in spite of (i.e. even though there was) a loud and confused sound of music. Everyday she created an obstruction in his (penance and meditation). Everyday Suśaṅkha, saying "Go, go (away)", pardoned her. Though thus sent away (i.e. asked to go away) she would still cause harm to him. (Thus)

told by him, she, too, getting angry, struck him, who remained in (i.e. practising) penance.

57-62. Then that Suśaṅkha angry and overcome with wrath said to her: "O wicked, sinful one, why did you obstruct (my penance)? Great people do not beat (back) a wicked person when beaten (by him). Though abused they do not get angry. This is the restraint (brought about) by righteousness. O wicked one, you struck me who am faultless and endowed with penance." Speaking this to that sinful Sunīthā, that pious one, ceased (to speak) and knowing her to be a female, kept himself away from anger. Then she, through sinful delusion and immaturity, spoke to that noble Suśaṅkha, who remained in (i.e. was practising) penance: "My father himself is the destroyer of the residents of the three worlds; he would always destroy the bad ones and would protect the truthful ones. There would be no fault on his part, he would behave very meritoriously."

63-66. Saying so, she went to her father and said to him: "O father, in the forest I struck a Gandharva's son, who was always practising penance in a secluded place and was free from desire and anger. He, the righteous one, endowed with anger and love said to me: 'One should not beat him who beats one, nor should one make him weep, who makes one weep.' Thus, O father, he spoke to me. Tell me the reason (for this)." O best brāhmaṇas, that righteous Mṛtyu, thus addressed, did not say anything to Sunīthā, in reply to (her) question.

67-71. She again came to the forest where that Suśaṅkha remained. Through wickedness she struck him, the best among those who practised penance, with the blows of her hands. O brāhmaṇas, the daughter of Mṛtyu beat Suśaṅkha. Then the highly lustrous one got angry and cursed her of a slender waist: "O wicked one, since you beat me, who am faultless and who remained in this forest, therefore I shall give (you) a curse. Listen, O wicked one, when, with your husband, you will lead the life of a housewife a son, full of evil conduct, censurer of gods and brāhmaṇas, engrossed in all sinful acts, will be (conceived) in your womb." Cursing like this, he too left, and resorted to penance only.

72-75. When that glorious one had left, Sunīthā went home. With her mind burning (with anger) she told her noble father as

(to how) she was then cursed by the son of a Gandharva. Mṛtyu listened to all that, and said: "Why did you harm him, who was practising penance and who was innocent? O (my) daughter, you have not done a proper thing in beating a truthful person." Saying so, the righteous Mṛtyu, reflecting upon what she had told him, became extremely pained.

Sūta said :

76-85. O brāhmaṇas, once the brāhmaṇa, the very lustrous and vigorous son of Atri went to the Nandana (garden); there he saw Indra, Pākaśāsana. He saw Indra, who was accompanied by hosts of celestial nymphs and Gandharvas and Kinnaras, who was (i.e. whose praise was) being sung by singers with seven very melodious notes, who was being fanned by beautiful women walking like swans with fragrant fans, and with chowries, who, the thousand-eyed one, shone with an umbrella (white) in colour like swans and (round) like the disc of the moon, who was adorned with all ornaments, who was engaged in sexual sports, who possessed an unlimited prowess. By his side he saw the blessed virtuous Paulomī, charming and auspicious, glorious with beauty, lustre and penance, shining with good fortune and chastity. With her that Indra enjoyed in the Nandana forest. Seeing his sport, the best brāhmaṇa Aṅga (thought): 'Lucky is the king of gods who is surrounded by such (beings). Oh, (great) is the power of his penance, due to which he has obtained such a great (i.e. high) position. When I shall have such a son, the great support of all the worlds, I shall obtain great happiness. There is no doubt about it.' Thus engaged in thinking he quickly came home.

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

The Account of Suvrata

Sūta said :

1-5. Then Aṅga, the very lustrous one, seeing noble Indra's wealth, enjoyment of amorous pleasures and sports (thought:)

'How shall I have a son, endowed with piety, like Indra?' Aṅga, the best among the righteous, thinking like this, came to his own house. Bowing down and with his neck (i.e. head) bent down (in respect) he asked Atri, his father: "Who enjoys this high position of Indra by doing pious deeds? Of what merit is this the result ? What deed did he do? And of what kind was it? What kind of penance did he have (i.e. practise)? Whom did he propitiate formerly? O best among the truthful ones, tell me in detail (about) this."

Atri said :

6-8. Bravo ! O noble one, you are asking me like this (a good question). O child, listen to me, who will tell you the account of Indra. Formerly there was an intelligent, excellent brāhmaṇa by name Suvrata. He pleased Kṛṣṇa, Hṛṣīkeśa, with penance. He again reached the meritorious womb of Aditi through Kaśyapa; and through Viṣṇu's grace, he became the king of gods.

Aṅga said :

9. O you affectionate towards your sons, how shall I have a son like Indra? Tell me a means for that, O best among the wise.

Atri said :

10-17. O you highly intelligent one, listen to the entire account of that illustrious Suvrata, in brief—as to how that intelligent Suvrata formerly propitiated Hari. The lord of the world (i.e. Viṣṇu) having observed his sincerity, devotion and meditation, gave him a great position. That Indra, sustaining the three worlds, enjoys the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile, and the (high) position, through Viṣṇu's favour only. All this I have told you, so also Indra's acts. O best one, Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu) is pleased with devotion and sincere meditation. Hari, pleased with devotion, being delighted, gives everything. Therefore, O (my) son, having propitiated Govinda, who gives everything, who is the cause of everything, who is omniscient, who knows everything, who is the best man among all, you will obtain from him whatever you desire. He is the giver of happiness, of the highest truth, of salvation, and is the lord of the worlds. Therefore, O son, go (and) propitiate him; you will obtain a son like Indra.

18-19. He, having heard the words uttered by that illustrious sage, which contained the highest truth, and having understood the import of these words, he, having saluted that eternal one, left (the place). That noble Aṅga, having taken his leave of his father, Brahmā's son, and resembling Brahmā, reached the peak of the Meru mountain, which was full of gold and gems.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

Aṅga Gets a Boon from Vāsudeva

Sūta said :

1-20. The best mountain (i.e. Meru), with its regions very bright with various gems and gold on all sides, shone like the Sun with his rays. All the meditating saints, seated on firm seats after resorting to very pleasing, cool, comfortable shades, meditated. At some places the sages practised penance; at some places Kinnaras sang (songs). Gandharvas, being delighted, (sang songs), beating time with their hands. Delightful songs were presented by them, who were engrossed in beating (and) measuring time in music, and with the seven musical notes; and with melody and closed fists. On that greatest mountain, Gandharvas, knowing the essential nature of songs, and being intent on singing, sang them, after having resorted to the shades of sandal-trees. The divine women danced there on the excellent mountain. The sound (of the recitation) of the Vedas, which destroyed sins, gave religious merit, which was divine, which bestowed great bliss, and which was very sweet, was heard on the best mountain. The excellent mountain shone with (trees like) sandal, Aśoka, Punnāga, Śāla, Tāla, and bunyan, resembling clouds. The lord of mountains shone at every place with Santānaka[1] trees, desire-yielding trees crowded with Ambhā (?) trees and well-blossomed divine trees. The mountain was full of many minerals and full of heaps of gems. It was full of many wonders and of various auspicious things. It was resorted to by groups of Vedas and was full of the groups of celestial nymphs. It

1. Santānaka—One of the five trees of Indra's paradise.

shone with sages, ascetics, Siddhas and Gandharvas. It looked beautiful with elephants resembling mountains and with the roars of lions. It was adorned with Śarabhas[1], with furious tigers and cunning beasts. Everywhere it looked charming with wells, pools and tanks containing spotless water and crowded with swans and ducks. It looked beautiful with golden, white and red lotuses. The lord of mountains looked charming with groups of rivers and streams having clear water, with Śāla and Tāla trees, and with crystal forms and elephants, and with slabs of stone which were extensive, golden, divine and which resembled the sun and fire. It was adorned with the mansions of deities, and palaces (resembling) excellent mountains, and with golden staffs resembling swans and the moon. It was also decorated with pitchers, chowries and palaces. It was also adorned with hosts of gods delighted by various excellences (of the mountain). That holy, best mountain Meru shone all round with many hosts of gods, Gandharvas and bards. That great river, which is very holy, which contains sacred water, which is rich with holy places, which is crowded with swans and lotuses, and which is resorted to by ascetics and hosts of sages, has risen from it.

21-31. Aṅgā, the great meritorious sage, the son of Atri, (went to) that best mountain having such excellences and auspicious on account of holy wonders. He entered a beautiful cave on the very sacred and secluded bank of the Gaṅgā. The intelligent one, free from desire and anger, sat there after having controlled all his senses, and meditated upon the pious Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa, the lord who removes all afflictions and who remained in his mind. He, being attentive, full of deep meditation and with his senses conquered (i.e. controlled) always saw Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) on a seat or bed or in a vehicle or in meditation. He saw Viṣṇu in the beings—mobile and immobile. That brāhmaṇa (saw Viṣṇu) in all wet, dry and other things. In this way a hundred years passed, while he was practising penance. Seeing the best brāhmaṇa (practising penance like this), the lord of the world, with the disc in his hand, always presented before him many very fearful dangers. With that lustre of the glorious god Nṛsiṁha, the pious and fearless (brāhmaṇa) burnt (himself) as

1. Śarabha—a fabulous animal said to have eight legs and to be stronger than a lion.

fire burns the fuel. The best brāhmaṇa Aṅga was getting emaciated by observances and restraints; yet by means of his own lustre he appeared shining like the sun and fire. The god appeared before him who was thus deeply engrossed in penances and was meditating upon Janārdana, and said to him, "O you who show respect, choose a boon." Seeing that Hṛṣīkeśa, Aṅga, who was highly delighted, with his mind pleased, and bowing down, praised him.

Aṅga said :

32-54. O you origin of beings, O you purifier, you are the refuge of all beings; O you lord of all beings, you are the soul of beings. My salutation to you who are full of merit. My salutation to you who are of the nature of merit, who are a mystery and are beyond all qualities; to you who are merit (itself), who are the cause of merit, who are endowed with merit and are of the nature of merit; to you who are the worldly life, the cause of the worldly life and who remove (i.e. free) your devotees from the worldly existence; to you from whom the worldly life has sprung up, to you who are a mystery, and the destroyer of the worldly life. Salutation to you, who are the sacrifice, who are of the form of sacrifices and the lord of sacrifice; who are connected with the sacrificial act and the holder of the conch. My repeated salutations to (you who are) gold, who hold a disc, to you who are truth, and are of true thoughts and are full of all truth. My salutation to you who are Dharma (i.e. Piety), the cause of Dharma and the cause of everything. My salutation to you whose body is Dharma, who are a great hero and who are the prop of righteousness. My salutation to you who are a meritorious and noble son and not a son; to you who destroy illusion and delusion and who bring about entire illusion. My repeated salutations to you who sustain illusion, who are embodied and formless. My salutation to you who take up all forms and are Śaṅkara (i.e. you who bring about blisses). My salutation to you, who are Brahman, of the nature of Brahman and identical with the highest Brahman; to you who are all lustre and possess lustre. My salutation to you who possess glory, who live in glory and sustain glory; to you who live in the ocean and are immortal. My salutation to you who are a great mineral, who are fierce and are

beyond great wisdom; to you who are not cruel, who are pure and the lord of sacred things. My salutations to you, the unlimited one, the complete one, and to the sinless one. Salutation to you who are the light of the sky and are of the form of a bird. Salutation to you who are the one to whom oblations are offered, who enjoys the oblations and who are of the form of oblations. Salutation to you who are Buddha (i.e. enlightened), who are a god, and you who are ever enlightened. Salutation to you, who are the oblation offered to the gods and to the manes; to you who are the utterance svadhā (used at the time of offering oblation to the manes) and svāhā (the utterance used at the time of offering oblation to the gods), to you who are pure, who are unmanifest and glorious. Salutation to you who are Vyāsa, Indra and of the nature of the Vasus; to you who are Vāsudeva, who are everything and to you who are of the form of fire; repeated salutations to you, who alone are Hari, Vāmana (i.e. Viṣṇu). Salutation to the god Nṛsiṁha and to you who maintain righteousness. My salutation to the cowherd Govinda and to the one-syllabled one. My salutation to you who are omni-syllabled and of the nature of the Supreme Soul. My salutation to you who are of the nature of the three principles or of the nature of the five elements; salutation to you who are (of the form of) the twentyfive principles and the support of the elements. Salutation to you who are Kṛṣna (i.e. Viṣṇu or dark), who are of the nature of Kṛṣna and are the lord of Lakṣmī. My salutation to you who are (charming) like a lotus-petal and are the highest bliss. My salutation to you who are the supporter of all and the destroyer of sins. My salutation to you who are the very great merit and you who practise truth. O eternal one, my repeated salutations to you who are immutable and a misty heap; to you having a lotus in (i.e. rising from) your navel; to you who are the great god. O Keśava, I salute your lotus-like feet. O you root of joy, O you dear to Lakṣmī, O Vāsudeva, O lord of all, O god, O Madhusūdana, make me your slave. O Keśava, I salute your feet. Be gracious to me in existence after existence, O you who give tranquility and who have a conch in your hand. Sprinkle me with water of knowledge, who am burnt by the heat of the fierce fire of the worldly existence and by many (kinds of) anguish and agony due to the deaths of sons etc. and of kinsmen; O lord Padmanābha, be a refuge to me.

55-58. Having heard this hymn of praise of (i.e. recited by) the noble Aṅga, Hṛṣīkeśa, shining with great lustre, and with the holy Kaustubha, marked with the Śrīvatsa, presented before Aṅga his own and very superior form having the conch, the disc and the mace in his hands, (and also) a lotus in his hand, and mounted upon Garuḍa, and with all limbs of his body beautified with a necklace, bracelets, and ear-rings, and looking great, divine and spotless, and charming due to the sylvan garland.

59-70a. Having thus manifested his own form, Hari, of the nature of all gods, said to that best noble sage, Aṅga : "O blessed brāhmaṇa, listen to (these) auspicious words." With a sound deep like (the thundering of) clouds, he spoke to the best brāhmaṇa : "I am pleased with this penance (practised by you). Choose an auspicious boon." He, full of great joy, again and again saluted the feet of Janārdana, who was shining, looking bright, who was the lord of people, who was of a universal form, who, the lord of Lakṣmī, was pleased, and said to him : "O you god of gods, O you holder of the conch, the disc and the mace, I am your slave. (If) you desire to grant me a boon, then give me a son born in my family (i.e. of my blood). Give me a son, the protector of all the people, and one full of all lustre shining like Indra in heaven. When you desire to grant me a boon, (then) (give me) a son, who is dear to all gods, who knows the Vedas, who is well-versed in the code of conduct, who is a donor, who is endowed with knowledge, and with the lustre of piety, who is the protector of the three worlds, who is Kṛṣṇa, who protects the truthful conduct, who is the best among the sacrificers, who is a unique hero, and who is the ornament of the three worlds, who is hospitable to brāhmaṇas, who knows the Vedas, whose promises are true, who has curbed his senses, who is unconquerable, who is the conqueror of all, whose lustre is like that of Viṣṇu, who is a devotee of Viṣṇu, who performs meritorious deeds, who is born due to merit, who has auspicious marks, who is tranquil, who is endowed with penance, who has mastered all branches of knowledge, who knows the Vedas, who is best among the meditating sages, and who is like you in point of virtues. Give me such a son."

Vāsudeva said :

70b-72. O you very intelligent one, you will have a son

endowed with all these qualities. He will support the family of Atri, and also this universe. He will also emancipate his father by means of his lustre, glory and merit; with his truthfulness he will emancipate his father (i.e. you) and his grandfather; you will reach my place, that is Viṣṇu's highest position.

73-75. The lord of gods, spoke like this to that Aṅga, O brāhmaṇa. (He said to him): "Marry the auspicious daughter of someone of virtuous power. Generate on her a son, who will be auspicious, bringing merit and dear (to you). O you very intelligent one, by my favour, he will be religious-minded, omniscient, knowing all, (that is) as desired by you." Thus giving (Aṅga) a boon Hari then vanished.

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

Sunīthā's Story

The sages said :

1. She (i.e. Sunīthā) was cursed by that Suśaṅkha, the noble son of a Gandharva. Due to his curse how did she become (i.e. what happened to her)? What deeds did she do?

2. O best brāhmaṇa, what kind of son did she obtain due to his curse? (Please) narrate to us in detail the account of Sunīthā also.

Sūta said :

3-14a. That Sunīthā, of a slender waist, who was cursed by him, being tormented by grief, went to her father's place. She disclosed her deeds to her father, Mṛtyu, the best among the truthful and the righteous ones. He spoke to Sunīthā, his daughter, who was cursed by that magnanimous one: "You committed a sin that destroys merit and lustre. O you noble one, why did you beat him, who was very tranquil? You did that which is contrary to (the ways of) all the world. Listen, what sin is committed by him who would kill him who is free from desire and wrath,

who is very tranquil, who loves piety, who is fully engrossed in the path of penance, and is settled in the highest Brahman. His son is born wicked, and gets (i.e. accumulates) much sin. There is no doubt that he who beats a person who beats him and makes him cry who is crying, suffers for his sin (i.e. of the other person). He (alone) is tranquil, he (alone) is one who has conquered (i.e. controlled) his mind, who does not beat him (i.e. the person) who beats him. O you (my) daughter, he who has beaten an innocent person, would (thus) later beat, through delusion and in sin, even an innocent man (?). He, the sinner, who, without any reason, causes anxiety to an innocent man or would later beat an innocent man through delusion or some sin, obtains the sin produced in the body of the innocent one. If the innocent person would beat the wicked-hearted person that beats him rashly after suddenly getting up, the sin of the sinner goes to the innocent person.

14b-19a. Therefore, one should not beat even a sinner. O (my) daughter, you have done, a very wicked deed. As you are today cursed by him, therefore practise meritorious deeds. Secure the company of the good, and behave (properly). O you (my) daughter, behave taking to profound abstract meditation and knowledge. The company of the good is greatly meritorious, and causes great bliss. O (my) daughter, note that merit, well-observed, of the company of the good. Highly intelligent sages, cleansed from within and without by touching, drinking and bathing in the water, obtain perfection. All these worlds—mobile and immobile—become pure (due to the company of the good).

19b-20. Water is calm, very cold, soft for the body, causing pleasure, clear, tasty, of a meritorious power, removing dirt; you should know that the saints are like that, and should wait upon them carefully.

21. As gold gives up its impurity by its contact with fire, similarly a man casts off his sin by the contact of the good.

22-24. The fire of truth would burn brightly only with the lustre of merit. A man whose lustre blazes with truth, who is very spotless due to knowledge and very hot due to meditation, cannot be touched by men born of sin. By the contact of the fire of truth, all (one's) sin perishes. Therefore, you should, by all means, have

contact with truth. Giving up your burden of sin, resort to merit in this way."

Sūta said :

25-26. In this way that Sunīthā, who was distressed, was advised by her father. Having saluted her father's feet, she went to a lonely forest. The devout one, giving up desire and anger and her childishness, and also abandoning tricks, malice and deceit, resorted to a secluded place.

27-28a. Her friends, endowed with grace, came there to sport. The large-eyed ones saw Sunīthā afflicted and meditating. Seeing her reflecting, they, full of anxiety, said to her:

28b-30. "O good one, full of anxiety why are you brooding? You, are causing anxiety and worry to us; tell us the cause (of your anxiety). Only one anxiety, entertained for piety (alone), is significant. The other kind of anxiety, viz. giving delight to the meditating sages in matters of piety is important. (I.e. the other kind of anxiety that is important is one which gives delight to the meditating sages in matters of piety.) (Any) other anxiety is worthless. One should not at all entertain it.

31-33. Anxiety withers the body; it destroys strength and lustre; it would destroy all happiness, and would show (i.e. bring about) loss of beauty. Anxiety would bring these, viz. thirst (i.e. desire), delusion and greed (to a person). Anxiety, when entertained, would produce sin day by day. Anxiety would show (i.e. bring about) bodily diseases, and would lead (one) to hell. Therefore, O beautiful one, behave by giving up anxiety.

34-35a. A man enjoys (or suffers) only what he has earned by means of his former deeds. A wise person should not mind them. Therefore give up your anxiety, and talk about happiness, unhappiness etc."

35b. Hearing those words of them, Sunīthā spoke these words.

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

Sunīthā's Problem

Sūta said :

1-2a. She, the noble one, who was very much afflicted with grief, told her friends how she was formerly cursed by the magnanimous Suśaṅkha, and all that she did.

Sunīthā said :

2b-5. O friends, listen now; I shall tell you something else. Seeing my wealth of beauty and excellence in age (i. e. youth) and good qualities, my father became worried about me. The very glorious one desired to give me (in marriage) to (one of the) gods or sages. Holding me by the hand, he said these words to them all : "This is my young daughter, full of good qualities and having charming eyes. Well-being to you, I desire to give her (in marriage) to a virtuous and very magnanimous (god or sage)."

6-8. At that time gods and sages heard the words of Mṛtyu. Gods, led by Indra, spoke to him, who was (thus) speaking: "This your daughter is endowed with virtues, and is a great treasure of good character; but she is defiled by one fault, viz. the curse of (i.e. given by) the sage. On her will be born a son, from whose semen a man will be (born) who will be a great sinner and the destroyer of the virtuous family.

9-14. A pitcher that is seen to be full of the water of the Gaṅgā, becomes a pitcher (full) of liquor when polluted with a drop of liquor. Due to the sinful contact of a sinner, the family becomes sinful. If a drop of the sour gruel made from the fermentation of boiled rice would go to (i.e. would get mixed with) milk, it would later destroy (i.e. spoil) the milk and would present its own nature. In the same way a sinful son would destroy the family; there is no doubt about it. This your sinful (daughter) is (soiled) with this blemish. Give her to someone else. (Please) go." Thus was my father told by gods. My father, afflicted with the grief was abandoned even by the noble gods, Gandharvas and sages; and the good men also did not accept me. Thus formerly I have committed a sinful act.

15-16. Tormented by agony and grief I have just resorted to the forest. I shall practise penance only, and shall wither my body. You have well asked me the effect and the cause. The deed, following my anxiety, has also been disclosed to you.

17. Speaking thus, that Sunīthā, Mṛtyu's glorious daughter, afflicted with grief, ceased speaking; and then did not say anything.

The friends said :

18-27. O you noble one, give up the grief, destroying your body. There is a blemish in the family of an atheist. (Even) gods have resorted to (i.e. committed) sin. Formerly (even) that Brahmā told a lie in the presence of Viṣṇu. That Brahmā (though) abandoned by gods, became most adorable. O (you), look at the king of gods (i.e. Indra) who was engaged in killing a brāhmaṇa. The noble one enjoys, along with the gods (the kingdom of) the three worlds. Formerly he went to (i.e. cohabited with) Ahalyā, Gautama's wife. He, who was an adulterer, has become the lord (of gods). Hara (i.e. Śiva) committed a fierce deed like killing a brāhmaṇa. Even now he lives with the skull of Brahmā. Gods and sages who have mastered the Vedas salute that god. The Sun, full of (i.e. suffering from) leprosy would illuminate (i.e. illuminates) the three worlds. All the worlds, including the mobile and the immobile, and led by the gods, salute him. Kṛṣṇa enjoys (i.e. suffers from) the curse given formerly by Bhārgava. Candra (i.e. the Moon), who went to (i.e. copulated with) Guru's (i.e. Jupiter's) wife, has become emaciated due to that. There will be (born) a very lustrous, valorous, very intelligent son of Pāṇḍu, viz. Yudhiṣṭhira, the king of kings. For the murder of his teacher, he will tell a lie. Great sin resides in (i.e. is committed by) these great ones. There is no defect in anyone of them nor any stigma.

28-29. O you beautiful one, you are smeared with a small sin. O you of an excellent complexion, we shall oblige you. O you of charming eyes, O you auspicious one, we do not find the qualities which you possess anywhere else (i.e. in any other woman).

30-35a. O you auspicious one, the virtue of beauty is the first ornament of women. The second one is good character; and

the third one is truthfulness. The fourth one is honesty; the fifth one is piety itself. Then, O you beautiful one, sweetness is said to be the sixth one. O you young girl; internal and external purity of women is the seventh (ornament). Devotion to the father is the eighth (one). Service (to others) is the ninth one. Tolerance is said to be the tenth one, and love is the eleventh (one). O you of an excellent complexion, loyalty to husband is said to be the twelfth (one). O you young girl, you are adorned with those (ornaments); O you beautiful one, do not get frightened. We shall find out that remedy by which that highly meritorious one will be your husband; for, we are (living) for you only.

35b. The excellent friends said to her: "Do not indulge in a rash act."

Sūta said :

36. Sunīthā, who was thus addressed, again said to those friends: "Tell me the remedy by which (he) will be my husband."

37-41a. The excellent ladies of charming eyes, led by Rambhā, said to her: "You are endowed with beauty and sweetness; you would lead (your husband) to prosperity. You were frightened by a brāhmaṇa's curse. (Therefore) we have come here." They spoke to that Mṛtyu's daughter having large and charming eyes: "We shall give you, O good one, an incantation (having the power of) giving all good and alluring men knowing all tricks." Then these (ladies) gave her the powerful incantation giving happiness. (They said :) "Instantly allure him, whomsoever god (or other) you desire to allure , O good lady."

41b-46. That Sunīthā, being very happy when well-equipped with the incantation, thus wandered with her friends, and observed men. While wandering she went to Indra's paradise. (There) on the bank of the Gaṅgā, she then saw the brāhmaṇa, who was the ornament of the Atri-family, who was handsome, who was endowed with all (auspicious) marks, who resembled the sun in lustre, who was matchless in form in the world, who was, as it were, another god of love, who had god-like form, who was noble and fortunate, who bestowed bliss (on others), who had no match, who was magnanimous, who resembled Viṣṇu in lustre, who was a devotee of Viṣṇu, who destroyed all sins, whose valour was like that of Viṣṇu, and who was free from desire and anger.

47. Seeing him, who was handsome, the very form of penance, of a divine prowess, and who was tormenting himself (by austerities), she asked Rambhā, her good friend: "Who is this excellent, magnanimous one, remaining in heaven (i.e. possessing divine qualities)?"

CHAPTER THIRTYFIVE

Rambhā Helps by a Suggestion

Rambhā said :

1-6a. Brahmā was born from the Unmanifest one, and from him was born the lord of created beings, viz. the religious-minded Atri. O good lady, his son, viz. this Aṅga of a noble mind, came to Nandanavana. Seeing Indra's glory excellent with graceful lustre, he too longed for a position similar to that of Indra: 'If I would have such a son endowed with righteousness, (then) my existence, endowed with fame and glory, will be very blessed.' Then he propitiated Hṛṣīkeśa with austerities and restraints. When Hṛṣīkeśa was very much pleased, he asked for a boon : "O Madhusūdana, give me a son who resembles Indra, whose lustre and valour are like that of Viṣṇu, who is a devotee of Viṣṇu, and who destroys all sins."

6b. Then he gave (him) a son possessing all such (qualities).

7-12. Since then the best brāhmaṇa looked (for) an auspicious maiden. He saw you as you are beautiful in all limbs. O you beautiful lady, go to (i.e. accept) him; from him you will have a son, who will be righteous, who will be knowing pious ways of behaviour and whose lustre and valour will be like that of Viṣṇu. All this has been told to you, since you had asked me like (i.e. about) that. There is no doubt that this one will be a suitable groom for you. That curse of (i.e. given by) Suśaṅkha also will be ineffective. O good noble lady, when from him a son propagating righteous conduct will be born, you will be happy. I am telling you the truth, (and) the truth (only). A farmer, with great sincerity, sows the seed. O respectable lady, he enjoys (i.e.

reaps) the fruit as he sows the seed. It shall never be otherwise. It would all be just like that.

13-14. This noble one is devout and possesses merit and strength; a son born from his semen will be endowed with his wealth of virtues, will be very lustrous, will be best among all human beings, will be very fortunate, of a devout disposition, and will be conversant with the principles of deep and abstract meditation.

15. Hearing these words of Rambhā, uttered affectionately and bestowing well-being, Sunīthā entertained the notion : This is the truth, the entire truth.

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

Sunīthā Gets Married and Vena is Born

Sunīthā said :

1-2a. O good lady, you have spoken the truth; I shall do like this. I shall allure the brāhmaṇa with this incantation, and not in any other way. Give me help so that I shall go to the meritorious one.

2b. Ramhbā, who was thus addressed by her, said to the high-minded one (i.e. Sunīthā):

3-5a. "O you beautiful young lady, tell me what kind of help I can give (you)." (Sunīthā said:) "O good lady, now go to him as my messenger." Thus she spoke to that Rambhā of charming eyes. That celestial nymph Rambhā promised (her) like this only: "I shall help you; give me instructions."

5b-13. Due to (her) good temperament, the beautiful lady, of large eyes and possessing beauty and youth, became of (i.e. took up) a divine form through a device. She was matchless in beauty in the world, and allured the three worlds. The charmingly smiling Rambhā, lovely in an all-elegant dress, was seated upon a swing on a very auspicious peak of Meru, which had lovely

caves, which was covered with many minerals, which was adorned with various gems, which was covered with divine trees, which looked lovely due to abundant flowers, which was covered (i.e. crowded) with hosts of gods, which was resorted to by Gandharvas and celestial nymphs, which was attractive, very charming, and full of the shadows of the sandal and the aśoka trees. The beautiful lady looked lovely with the dark-blue silken garment, and with a bodice, having the colour of a bandhūka-flower, O best brāhmaṇa. The young lady, with all her limbs beautiful, had her hands engaged in (playing upon) the lute, (properly) beating the time, and was singing an excellent, very melodious song, alluring the universe. The very beautiful young woman was surrounded by her friends; and Aṅga had resorted to meditation in an auspicious secluded cave. He, free from desire and anger, meditated upon Janārdana.

14-15a. The bright one (i.e. Aṅga), hearing that very melodious, sweet and very charming song, accompanied by beating time and (proper) measure, and attractive to all beings, swerved from his meditation, as he was fascinated by that enchanting song.

15b-17. With his mind swerving due to that fascination, looking repeatedly (at her) quickly got up from his seat, speedily went there; the very glorious one, seeing her seated on a swing, and with her hand full of the neck of the lute, laughing, singing well and with her face resembling the moon, was allured by the song and (her) beauty.

18-19. The best brāhmaṇa, the son of a sage, was struck with Cupid's arrows (i.e. was overpowered by passion) due to her beauty, and with his mind perturbed and disturbed, talked through infatuation, and recoiled repeatedly. That moment only he perspired, shivered and was distressed.

20. Then Aṅga, as it were being allured by great fascination, languid, and with his mind unsteady, trembling and being afflicted, came (there).

21. Seeing that Sunīthā, Mṛtyu's daughter, of large eyes, glorious and smiling charmingly, the noble one said to her:

22. "O you beautiful lady, who are you? To whom do you belong? Surrounded by (your) friends, for what mission have you come (here)? Who has sent you to the forest?

23. In (this) large forest, your beautiful body is shining everywhere. Tell me (all about it) today only; be gracious to me."

24. The great sage, pierced with the arrows of Cupid, and infatuated by her fascinating device, did not grasp her actions.

25. Hearing these great (i.e. significant) words of that very intelligent one, she (just) looked at the face of her friend, and did not say anything to that brāhmaṇa.

26. Sunīthā, with a sign, set on her friend, Rambhā. Then Rambhā respectfully said to the brāhmaṇa:

27. "This noble one is the daughter of the glorious Mṛtyu, known as Sunīthā, and adorned with the wealth of all (good) marks.

28. The young girl is looking for a groom, who is a treasure of penance, who is tranquil and restrained, who is very intelligent and well-versed in Vedic lore."

29-34. Having heard these very significant words, the great sage said to that Rambhā, the best among the celestial nymphs: "I have propitiated Viṣṇu, Hari, of the form of all gods. He has given me a boon (granting) a son, and giving all prosperity. For that, O good lady, and for having a son, I am everyday thinking of the daughter of someone of an auspicious power. And for ever I am really not finding a good bride. Let this daughter, of Mṛtyu, whose conduct is righteous, and who is beautiful take me (as her groom) here, if she desires a husband. There is no doubt that I shall give whatever this young girl asks for. For having union with her I say that I (shall) give (even) what cannot be given." (Rambhā said:) "O best brāhmaṇa, listen, what one thing you should just give."

Rambhā said :

35-37. O best brāhmaṇa, listen to the pledge which I (shall) tell now. She is never to be abandoned by you. She is your lawful wife. You have never to assume either a blemish or a merit of her; (and) for this, O best brāhmaṇa, show (us) actually (some) convincing proof. O best brāhmaṇa, give her your hand giving a convincing proof.

(He said) : "Let it be so. I have given my hand to her. There should be no doubt about it."

Sūta said :

38-45. Thus establishing a relation showing a convincing proof, he married Sunīthā by means of the Gāndharva (type of) marriage. Having given that Sunīthā (in marriage) Rambhā, with her mind delighted, took leave of her, and went to her own abode. The friends, with their minds very much delighted, went to their own abodes. When all the friends had (thus) left, Aṅga sported with his dear wife. Having generated on her a son possessing all (auspicious) marks, he named the son 'Vena'. Then that son of Sunīthā (viz. Vena), of a great lustre, grew. The intelligent one, having studied the branches of the Veda, along with archery, mastered all the lores. Vena, the son of Aṅga, abided by good manners. That Vena, the best among the brāhmaṇas, took to the behaviour of kṣatriyas. As Indra, endowed with all lustre, shines in heaven, the very intelligent one shone with his own might and valour.

46-50a. When following the period of Cākṣuṣa[1] Manu that of Vaivasvata arrived, the beings were sinking in the world without a protector of the beings (i.e. without a king). The sages, having penance as their wealth, and knowing the essence of righteousness, thought of a king knowing righteousness and well-versed in truth. They just saw Vena, prosperous and endowed with (auspicious) marks. The best brāhmaṇas consecrated him in the position of the lord of created beings. When that noble king (Vena), the son of Aṅga, was consecrated, all the lords of created beings went to a penance-grove. When they had left, Vena ruled over the kingdom.

Sūta said :

50b-57. That Sunīthā, seeing her son looking well after the entire kingdom, thought: 'Due to the prowess and the curse of that noble one, my glorious son will be the protector of righteousness.' Thinking like this, she was everyday afraid of her former sins. She would present (i.e. she presented) before her son the very meritorious essential requisites of Dharma. She would throw (i.e. she threw) light on such virtues as truthfulness etc. She said to her son like this: "O son, I am the daughter of Dharma; (and) your father knows the essence of piety; therefore, practise piety."

1. Cākṣuṣa is the sixth Manu and Vaivasvata is the seventh. Manvanatara is a period or age of a Manu. This period comprises 4, 320, 000 human years or 1/14th day of Brahmā, the fourteen Manvantaras making up one whole day.

Thus that good lady would always advise her son, Vena. He would obey (i.e. obeyed) the words, proper for (i.e. leading to the well-being of) his subjects. Thus on the globe Vena had become a king. The people lived happily. The subjects were pleased. Thus was the greatness of the kingdom of noble Vena. When the king was ruling, the ways of Dharma prevailed.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

A Heretic Meets Vena

The sages said :

1. (If) thus was the creation of the noble Vena, how is it that giving up righteous conduct he would be (i.e. became) (a man) of wicked mind?

Sūta said :

2. Sages endowed with spiritual and worldly knowledge, and knowing the truth, tell what is good and what is bad; that would never become otherwise in the world.

3. O brāhmaṇas, how can the curse, given by that noble Suśaṅkha, who was practising penance, not turn true?

4-8. I shall tell (you) all the sinful conduct of Vena. When he—a noble king knowing righteousness—was ruling, a man, having put on a guise, naked, of a huge body, with his head clean-shaved, of a great lustre, holding under his armpit a broom of peacock's feathers, and a drinking-pot made of cocoa-nut in his hand reciting (texts containing) wrong doctrines, vilifying the Vedic religion, came (there). He quickly came to (the place) where Vena was (seated). The sinner entered the court of that Vena. Seeing him having arrived (there) Vena asked him a question:

9-11. "Who are you, taking up such a form, that have come into my court? Why have you come before me who am (seated) in the court? What (kind of) dress (do you have)? What is your

name? What is your faith? Tell me (all this). What is your Veda (i.e. which Veda do you follow)? What are your practices? What (kind of) penance (do you practise)? What abstract meditation (do you possess)? What (kind of) prowess (do you have)? What are the real characteristics of your faith? Tell me all that and the truth before me."

12a. Hearing those words of Vena the sinful man said these words.

The sinful man said :

12b-15. In vain you are ruling. You are a great fool, there is no doubt about it. I am all-in-all of Dharma (i.e. religious practices). I am most adored by gods. I am knowledge, I am truth, I am the eternal supporter. I am Dharma (i.e. religious practices), I am salvation, I am full of all gods. I have sprung from the body of Brahmā; I am faithful to my promise, and not otherwise. Know me to be the chief Jaina saint, having the body of true religion. The meditating sages, intent on (obtaining) knowledge, run to me only.

Vena said :

16. What kind of acts (do you do)? What is your doctrine? What are your practices? Tell (all this to me).

The sinful man said :

17-21. (That is my faith) where Arhats are the gods, and Nirgrantha is looked upon as the preceptor. Compassion is said to be the best way of life and in it is seen (to lie) salvation in (i.e. according to) this faith. There is no doubt about this. I shall (now) narrate the practices. (In this faith) there is no performance of sacrifices; there is no officiating at sacrifices; there is no recital of the Vedas; there is no offering of the three daily prayers; there is no penance; there is no charity; it is without (the exclamations viz.) svadhā and svāhā; there is no offering to gods or manes; there are no rites like sacrifices; there is no gratification of the manes; there is no (worship offered to a) guest; there is no offering to all the deities. The best worship is that of a Jaina mendicant, and the best meditation is that of an Arhat. This way

of life is seen in the Jaina faith. I have told you all this i.e. the characteristics of my faith.

Vena said :

22-23. (In your faith) the way of life as told in the Vedas is not seen, nor are rites like sacrifices seen; no oblations to manes, no śrāddha, no sacrifice offered to all gods, and also no charity and penance are seen. Where (then) are the characteristics of the pious way of life to be (seen)? Tell me what kind of the way of life based on compassion (you advocate).

The sinful one said :

24-32a. This body of (human) beings is nourished by the five elements. This soul is of the nature of air, so they have no association. Even as in the water there is a contact of the form of bubbles, in the same way there is a contact among the beings. The earthly state is (present) in the matter; water also remains there only; fire also is seen there; powerful wind is also seen in (these) three. The state of bubbles covering the space is then produced in water, where a very bright, excellent circle is produced. It is seen just for a moment, and just after a moment it is not seen. In the same way contact among beings is seen. At the time of death, the soul departs, and the five (elements in the body) go to (i.e. merge into) the five (gross elements). Moreover the mortals being confounded by ignorance behave with one another (foolishly). Through folly they perform śrāddha and offer oblations to the manes in the evening. O best king, where is the dead person (at that time)? Of what nature does he eat? (i.e. what is his state when he eats?). What is knowledge? What kind is the body (after death)? By whom is it seen? Tell us (all about it). (Only) the brāhmaṇas, being fed with sweet food go satisfied. To whom would the śrāddha be offered? The faith (due to which a śrāddha is offered) has no meaning.

32b-42. I shall tell you another fierce act (mentioned) in the Vedas. When a guest goes (i.e. arrives) to the house, a brāhmaṇa (kills and) cooks (the flesh of) a great bull; or O king of kings, he would feed the guest (with the flesh of) a goat. (They kill) a horse in a horse-sacrifice, and a bull in a bull-sacrifice; a man in a human sacrifice and goats in a Vājapeya sacrifice. O great

king, a great slaughter of many animals is done at a Rājasūya sacrifice. At a Puṇḍarīka sacrifice one would kill (i.e. one kills) an elephant, and at an elephant-sacrifice (they kill) an elephant. At the Sautrāmaṇī sacrifice a beast is seen to be fit for being sacrificed. Thus, O prince, listen how at rites of various forms killing of beasts of various species is laid down. What are the characteristics of gifts that are given? That food should be known as left-over, (where) sumptuous food is had, and (when) in a great sacrifice they kill those (beasts) that are extremely impure. What righteousness is seen there or what fruit is seen there where those who are learned in the Vedas have prescribed the killing of beasts? Due to that (i.e. the killing of beasts) merit perishes and the (so-called) religious merit does not give (i.e. lead to) salvation. That way of life which is without compassion is fruitless. There is no doubt that the right way of life lies there where lives of beings are protected. It is not the right way of life (or righteousness) where there are offerings to gods, manes, penance, truth, and rashness without compassion, O best king. The Vedas are not Vedas where compassion is not (prescribed).

43-52a. Even a cāṇḍāla or a śūdra, who, being intent upon the gift of kindness, would protect a life, is said to be a brāhmaṇa. But that cruel brāhmaṇa who is intent upon killing beasts, is very ruthless, sinful, hard-hearted and of a cruel mind. That Veda which is without knowledge, is said to be a Veda (only) by the rogues. Veda stands firmly there where there would be knowledge. O you very intelligent one, neither truth nor rite is seen in the merciless Vedas and Brāhmaṇas and also in the brāhmaṇas who follow the Vedas. O best king, the Vedas, void of truth are not Vedas and the brāhmaṇas who are not truthful (are not brāhmaṇas). There is no fruit of charity, so gifts also are not given. As are the characteristics of śrāddha, same are those of charity. Whatever is the faith of Jīva is the giver of enjoyment and salvation—that I shall tell you. First, one with his mind being tranquil, should show kindness. One should devoutly propitiate god Jina who (has pervaded) the mobile and immobile. With one's mind having pure thoughts, one should worship Jina alone. Salutation should be offered to that god, and not otherwise (i.e. not to anyone else). One should never salute the

feet of one's mother and father. Then what should be told about others, O best king?

Vena said :

52b-53. (They say) that these brāhmaṇas, preceptors and others, and also the rivers like Gaṅgā, are holy places giving great religious merit. Is that the truth? Tell me if you desire piety (to flourish) here.

The sinful man said :

54-60. O great king, from the sky the clouds shower water. Having floated in the water which has fallen everywhere on the ground and on the mountains, he would stand, and produce compassion everywhere. Rivers are but the streams of blemish. How have you heard (i.e. how is it told in the scriptures) that the holy places are (situated) in (i.e. on the banks of) them? O great king, ponds, lakes, seas, and mountains—the heaps of stones—support the earth. No sacred place can be situated in (or on) them. A cloud is the best (holy place) due to its (containing) water. If a bath (i.e. a dip in water) causes great religious merit, then why is it not (found) in the fish? If by bath purity is produced, then the fish are purified. It cannot be otherwise (i.e. it is quite certain). Sacred place and eternal Dharma (i.e. way of life) are to be found where Jina remains. Penance and all merit due to bath etc. is settled there. O lord of kings, Jina alone is full of everything. There is no other (Dharma) than that; that is the holiest place. This is the greatest gain. So always meditate on him; you will be very happy.

61. Censuring by (indicating) the sinful nature of the entire (Vedic) religion, the Vedas, and charity of the form of sacrifices, along with (i.e. causing) merit, the sinful one advised Aṅga's son in various ways.

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

The End of Vena's Reign

Sūta said :

1-2. Vena, thus advised by that very sinful Jina, and deluded by him, attained to a sinful attitude. Abandoning the Vedic faith and rites of a truthful conduct, he saluted the feet of that very wicked one.

3-5a. There was cessation of good sacrifices, and also of the Vedas. Religious practices full of holy scriptures (i.e. as told in the holy scriptures) did not proceed at that time. As a result of his (bad) rule, the world became full of all sins. When that king ruled, there were no sacrifices, no (recitations of) the Vedas, no excellent purport of the holy texts, no charity and no study, O brāhmaṇas.

5b-9. Thus there was the cessation of religious conduct, and great sin proceeded uninterruptedly. Though warded off by Aṅga, he very much acted otherwise. The wicked-minded one saluted neither the feet of his father nor of his mother. (He did) not (salute) the feet of any brāhmaṇa also. (He thought:) 'I alone am valorous.' Though warded off by his father and by his mother, the wicked-minded one did not perform auspicious, meritorious (acts) like giving gifts at a holy place. The very glorious one (lived) for a long time according to his own ideas. They all thought: 'For what reason has he become a sinner? The son of Aṅga Prajāpati is a bane to his family.'

10. The religious-minded (Aṅga) again asked the daughter of magnanimous Mṛtyu: "O dear one, tell me the truth: Due to whose fault is he born (like this)?"

Sunīthā said :

11-13. O you highly intelligent one, [the daughter (of Yama) formerly only told Aṅga her own account and her merit and faults: (She said:)] in my childhood I committed a sin towards the magnanimous Suśaṅkha. I have not done anything else. The angry one cursed me: "Your progeny would be wicked." Thus, I think, O glorious one, this (Vena) has become wicked due to that (curse of Suśaṅkha).

14-15. The very lustrous one, having heard this, went to a forest with her. When the glorious one went to a forest along with his wife, the Seven Sages then approached Vena. Calling him they thus spoke to (him) the son of Aṅga :

The Sages said :

16-17. O Vena, do not act rashly; you are the guardian of the subjects. You yourself have put all this world and the three worlds along with the mobile and the immobile on the righteous path, O glorious one. Give up evil deeds, and perform auspicious deeds.

18a. When they had spoken like this, Vena laughed and said :

Vena said :

18b-20a. I alone am the highest (form of) religion; I alone deserve to be worshipped; I am eternal; I am the supporter; I am the protector; I alone am the import of the Veda; I am religious; I am the ancient, very holy, Jaina religion. O brāhmaṇas, by means of your actions, resort to me, who am of the form of religion.

The Sages said :

20b-24. The three castes viz. brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and vaiśyas are twice-born.[1] This (i.e. the Veda) is an ancient sacred text meant for all the castes. The beings behave according to the Vedic practices; therefore they (continue to) live. You are born in the family of Brahman. (So) you are a brāhmaṇa only. Then you, who had performed valorous deeds, were made the king of the earth. O best king, brāhmaṇas live happily due to the religious merit of the king. They perish due to his sin. Therefore practise righteous deeds. O king, you honoured and practised righteous deeds; but (did) not (do) the deeds of (i.e. proper for) Tretā and Dvāpara-yuga.

25-30. When Kali (-yuga) sets in, all men, deluded by sins, will act after having resorted to the Jaina faith. Men will abandon Vedic practices, and will commit sins. There is no doubt that the

1. Dvijātayaḥ—Men of any of the first three castes of the Hindus.

Jaina faith is the root of sin. O best king, the fall of those men, who are heaps of sins, is brought about by this great delusion. Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu), the destroyer of all sins, will be (appearing) for their destruction and for nothing else. Taking the form of his liking he will restrain (them) from sins. When sins will have thus accumulated, he, the god will be (appearing) as Kalki[1] for the destruction of the Mlecchas; there is no doubt about it. Give up the behaviour of (i.e. proper for) Kali (-yuga) and resort to merit. Behave truthfully; become the guardian of your subjects.

Vena said :

31. I am the best among the wise; I have known everything here. He who behaves in a different way will certainly be punished.

32-37a. All the magnanimous sons of Brahman got angry with that wicked-hearted king who was talking too much. When the high-souled brāhmaṇas were angry, king Vena, through the fear of a curse from the brāhmaṇas, entered an ant-hill. Then the angry sages looked for Vena everywhere. Knowing that the king who had fled, was well-settled in an ant-hill, the brāhmaṇas, forcibly brought (out) the cruel and wicked (king). Seeing the sinner the sages were well-composed. Getting angry, they churned the left hand of the king. From it sprang up a very short, terrible barbarian, whose complexion was dark-blue, whose eyes were red, who had arrows in his hand, and held a bow (in his hands).

37b-41. He became the king, supporter and the protector of all sinful Niṣādas, especially of the Mlecchas. O highly intelligent one, seeing that sinful one, the sages also churned the right hand of that noble Vena. From it sprang up very intelligent and very powerful and noble king of kings, viz. Pṛthu, who milked the earth. By the power of his merit, and by the favour of that disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), Vena, having enjoyed the position of a sovereign emperor, went to Viṣṇu's heaven. That is the highest position of Viṣṇu.

1. Kalki—The tenth and last incarnation of Viṣṇu in his capacity of the destroyer of the wicked and liberator of the world from its enemies.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

On Gifts and Worthy Recipients of Gifts

The sages said :

1. O you best among the truthful ones, tell us in detail, how Vena casting off his sin went to heaven.

Sūta said :

2-6a. O best brāhmaṇa, by the contact of the merit of the sages, by their concurrence, the sin went out of his body as a result of the churning of his body. Then that Vena of a righteous mind obtained eternal knowledge. O brāhmaṇas, free from desire and anger, he practised penance for a full hundred years in the hermitage of the sage Tṛṇabindu, which destroyed sins, and (which was situated) on the right bank of Revā. O glorious ones, god (Viṣṇu), the holder of the conch, disc and mace, was pleased with the sinless king due to his severe penance. Being pleased with him, he said to him: "I am pleased. Choose an excellent boon."

Vena said :

6b-7. O god, if you are pleased with me, give me an excellent boon: I desire to go, by your power, with this body, and along with my father and mother, to your abode, to the highest abode of Viṣṇu, O god of gods.

Śrī Vāsudeva said :

8. O king, where has that great infatuation, by which you were deluded, gone? You were caused to fall on the path of darkness by greed united with infatuation.

Vena said :

9-10a. O lord, I was deluded by the sin which I had formerly committed. Therefore (please) emancipate me from this very fierce sin. Tell me through your grace what (i.e. which hymn) I should mutter or recite.

The lord said :

10b-15. Well, O blessed king, your sin has perished. By means of your penance you have become pure. So I shall tell you (what) merit (is). O dear, formerly Brahmā had asked me as (i.e. what) you have asked. I (shall) tell you all that I had told him. When once, Brahmā staying in the lotus sprung from (my) navel was engrossed in meditation, Viṣṇu (i.e. I) appeared before him for granting him a boon, O you of a good vow. Desiring a good state (i.e. salvation), he asked him about a hymn, of a great religious merit, destroying sin, and called Vāsudeva. O glorious one, he (i.e. I) taught him the hymn, best among all hymns, called Vāsudeva very much pleasing to Viṣṇu, and giving all happiness to men who always recited and muttered it.

Viṣṇu said :

16-19. This entire world is pervaded by me of an unmanifest form. Therefore sages devoted to Viṣṇu call me Viṣṇu (i.e. one who pervades). I should be respectfully known to be that Vāsudeva, in whom the beings live, and who lives in the beings. Since, at the end (of the world) the lord leads the beings to the unmanifest one, therefore, he (i.e. I) should be known, by those who seek his (i.e. my) refuge, by the name Saṅkarṣaṇa. With the desire 'Let me be many', I take up any form I intend (to take up). Therefore, I should be known as Pradyumna by those who desire (to have) sons.

20-25. In this world I am not restrained by anyone except the lords of all, viz. Hara and Keśava, by means of the prowess of deep and abstract meditation; therefore I have (the epithet) Aniruddha. To the world, I, possessing spiritual and material knowledge, am known as Viśva. Being awake and full of reflection, I am possessed of self-consciousness. Full of the movements of the world and possessed of sense-organs and form I am (called) Taijasa (i.e. bright); I am in the state of sleep when I am without understanding and action. When I am the presiding deity I move (everywhere) occupying all. I am supposed to be unconcerned with the world when I am in the state of deep sleep. As Turīya (i.e. in the fourth state) I am without any modification and void of properties. With my form reflected everywhere I am

unattached and (am just) like a witness. I am the individual soul still sticking to the worldly defilements; I am consciousness and joy; I am full of consciousness; and have the form of consciousness. I am eternal, immutable; I am of the form of Brahman; know me to be Brahman only.

The lord said :

26. Speaking so to Brahmā about his own form formerly, Viṣṇu vanished. He too knowing his universality, in a moment became self-possessed.

27. O king, you too are pure due to the birth of Pṛthu only. Still, O you of a good vow, propitiate the lord with this hymn.

28a. Viṣṇu, being pleased, said to him: "O you, who give respect to others, choose a boon."

Vena said :

28b-29a. O Viṣṇu, give me the best refuge; (please) protect me from the sin. I have sought your refuge. Tell (i.e. show) me the cause (i.e. way to) the best state (i.e. beatitude).

Viṣṇu said :

29b-39. O you blessed one, formerly only the noble Aṅga had propitiated me, (and) I had granted him a boon. O you illustrious one, O you best brāhmaṇa, O you prince, you will go to the best heaven of Viṣṇu by means of your own deeds. O noble one, just ask for a boon for yourself. O illustrious Vena, listen to the account that took place formerly. Formerly the glorious Suśaṅkha, getting angry, gave a curse to your mother, Sunīthā, in her childhood, O king. Then I, who had known (Aṅga's) mind, and who desired to emancipate you, gave a boon to Aṅga: 'You will have a good son.' O you who love virtues, having thus spoken to your father I will, having sprung up from your body, protect the world. I remain on the earth as Indra shines in heaven. The sacred text: 'Oneself is born as (one's) son', is true. So, O dear, you will get the highest position as a result of my boon. For getting the (best) position (i.e. salvation), O king, O hero, give a gift; I (am the one), who in the form of the sinful naked one, spoke to you, to cause you deviate from righteousness;

otherwise the words of Suśaṅkha would have become untrue. I myself am injunction and prohibition both. I am the one who gives the fruit (to one) according to one's deeds, who is beyond comprehension and who insists on virtues.

40-46a. (Giving) a gift is the highest, the best. It is the cause of everything. Therefore you give gifts. Merit proceeds from (giving) gifts. Sin perishes due to (the giving of) gifts; therefore, do give gifts. O best king, perform sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice. Give gifts of land etc. to brāhmaṇas. Due to (giving) good gifts enjoyment is obtained, glory is obtained; fame takes place (i.e. is obtained) due to good gifts and happiness is secured through good gifts. A man obtains (i.e. goes to) heaven by means of (giving) gifts, and there enjoys the fruit (of his gifts). When the time of the maturity of a good gift that is given through faith arrives, O best one, the man (i.e. the giver of gifts) would go to a sacred place—this is also the fruit of (his) religious merit. To him, who, keeping faith in me, gives a great gift to a worthy brāhmaṇa, I give everything and whatever he desires with (i.e. in) his mind.

Vena said :

46b-48a. Tell me about the (proper) time of (i.e. for giving) a gift. What are the characteristics of the (proper) time (for giving a gift)? Being gracious to me, O lord of the world, if you have compassion for me, tell me in detail the nature of a sacred place, and also the good (i.e. proper) characteristics of a worthy recipient, and the procedure of (giving) a gift.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said :

48b-57. O king, O great lord, I shall tell you the time for regular and occasional charity and also for the optional one, and for making daily and occasional gifts which would lead to the fourth (goal of life, i.e. salvation). At the time of sunrise, sin perishes everywhere. Very fierce darkness destroys men. This sun, my portion, is thought to be the treasure of lustre by day. Sins, burnt by the lustre of him only, are reduced to ashes. O king, what can be said about that which increases the religious merit of him who even gives water to my rising portion (i.e. the

rising sun)? When an auspicious time comes, if a person, after having bathed and worshipped his parents and gods gives, according to his capacity and with his mind purified by faith, gifts of food, water, fruits, flowers, garments, tāmbūla, ornaments, gold, and gems etc., he has unending merit. O king, he, who would also offer water dedicated to me at midday and afternoon, has unending merit. Like this he regularly gives food, drink, sweets, ointment, sandal, flowers, camphor etc. along with garments and ornaments, (which) gives enjoyments and happiness. This is said to be the usual time (i.e. time for regular charity), auspicious for those who desire to give gifts or offer worship.

58-71a. Now I shall tell you about the excellent occasional (charity). There is no doubt that one should give gifts at all the three times. He, who desires his own well-being should not pass a day void (of gifts). O king due to the power of the time at which something is given, a man (becomes) very intelligent, full of great power, rich, virtuous, learned, wise and far-seeing. I keep the excellent man away from food for a fortnight, a month, or a day—that is, as long as he has not given food. One who has not given an excellent gift has eaten his own excrement. Being displeased (with such persons) I generate in their bodies a disease, which keeps off all enjoyments, which gives them great trouble, which is accompanied by weak digestion, and which causes fever and suffering. He who has not made a gift (of food) to Brahmins and deities, three times, and has himself eaten sweets, has committed a great sin. O great king, he should thus purify his body by a severe expiation, and also by fasts withering up the body. As a cobbler cleanses the hide in the bowl with exudations from trees and expands it, in the same way I certainly purify a sinner, by proper use of herbs, and also by means of astringent and bitter medicines; (thus I do) in the form of a physician, with hot water and heating, and in no other way; there is no doubt about it. Other people enjoy his excellent, auspicious enjoyments as desired(?) What can (even) a powerful man do if he has not given an excellent gift? I torment him through the form of a great sin. O king of kings, if the sinners, through selfishness, have not given the regular gifts with a mind purified with faith, then with terrible means I consume them.

Vāsudeva said :

71b-75. O best of men, I shall explain to you the occasional time (i.e. times for making occasional gifts) and the merit (obtained by giving such gifts); listen attentively and with a good mind. O king, when it is the new moon day or the full moon day or the Saṁkrānti day, or Vyatīpāta or when it is Vaidhṛti Ekādaśī, or when it is the full moon day in Māgha or Āṣāḍha, or Vaiśākha or Kārtika, or when the new moon day falls on Monday, or on the anniversary days of the Manu-age etc., when it is the day on which the elephant's shadow (falls towards the east), or it is a day called pitṛkṣaya—all these are explained (by me) to you, O best king.

76-83. I shall tell you the fruit of the gifts that are given on these (occasions). O best king, listen. To the man, who devoutly gives (a gift) intended for me to a brāhmaṇa, I give, without hesitation, a house, happiness, heaven and salvation and many (other things). There is no doubt about this, O great king. I shall (now) explain to you the optional time (i.e. time for optional charity) for giving a gift which is fruitful. The best sages have told about the auspicious time for all vows in honour of gods etc., and also for giving gifts. O king, I shall also tell you about the time leading to prosperity. Of all the sacrificial rites the nuptial one is the best; O king, so also the time when the rite of the birth of a son, his tonsure-ceremony or thread-ceremony is performed; so also the time of the installation of the palace-flag or of deities; so also that (of the fixing ceremony) of the site of wells, pools, lakes, houses, is called (the time) leading to prosperity, when the mothers are worshipped. At this time (a man) should give gifts which bring about all (kinds of) success. O best king, I have just told you the time leading to prosperity.

84-104. (Now) I shall tell you something else which removes affliction due to sin. When the time of death has come, a man, knowing (that this) death is (imminent), should give a gift, causing comfort on (his) way to Yama, O best man. O great king, I have told you the times called regular and occasional ones, and also those that lead to prosperity. I have (also) told you the time of death. I have told (you about) these times which give fruits of one's deeds. O king, (now) I shall tell you the

characteristics of a sacred place. Among excellent holy places this Gaṅgā shines. (Others that are) mentioned are the holy (rivers) Sarasvatī, Revā, Yamunā, Tāpī; and river Carmaṇvatī, (and also the rivers) Sarayū, Gharghară, and Venā destroying all sins, Kāverī, Kapilā and the big (river) Viśvatāriṇī, (and also) Godāvarī and Tuṅgabhadrā, O king. (The river) Bhīmarathyā is declared always to cause fear to the sinners. Other excellent rivers are Devikā, Kṛṣṇagaṅgā etc. (For offering gifts) on auspicious occasions there are many holy places of (i.e. on the banks of) these (rivers). Rivers, whether (they flow) through a village or a forest, are purifying everywhere. At these places acts like bath, charity etc. should be performed. O best ones, when the name of a holy place (on the banks) of those (rivers) is not known, the utterance of the (my) name should be done by saying: 'This is Viṣṇu's holy place', O king. O prince, a devotee should utter (the name of) me at the sacred places and (while presenting gifts) to gods. He gets the fruit of his merit due to (the utterance of) my name. O best king, at the time of bathing at unknown excellent holy places, and (offering presents) to unknown deities, one should just utter my name. O best king, the Creator has made these rivers the mothers of the all-meritorious sacred places, and they are (to be found) everywhere on the globe. O king, a man should not take bath etc. here and there (i.e. anywhere). Due to the grace of the excellent holy places, one gets an inexhaustible fruit. The seven oceans only are of the nature of sacred places and are very meritorious. O king, the lakes like Mānasa etc. are declared to be like them only. Streams and ponds are also said to be of the nature of sacred places. There is no doubt about it. (There are) O great king, (certain) very small rivers. A sacred place is said to exist in them (i.e. on their banks), so also in all ditches excepting (temporary) wells. On the surface of the earth, mountains like Meru are also of the nature of holy places. A sacrificial place, a sacrifice well-put (i.e. performed) in a fire-chamber, and also the place where a śrāddha is offered, is pure like that. Similarly a temple, a sacrificial chamber, a chamber where Vedas are studied (is pure). In the houses a cow-pen, possessing merit, is (said to be) the best. A sacred place exists there, where the performer of a Soma-sacrifice would be (present) and also a grove where the meritori-

ous Aśvattha stands (is a sacred place). A sacred place exists there where there would be a palāśa or an udumbara tree or a bunyan tree; and also at a place where other sylvan marks (are present).

105-107a. These are said to be sacred places, and also father and mother; (the place) where a Purāṇa is being recited, or the one where (one's) preceptor resides (is also sacred). There is no doubt that that place where a good wife lives is a sacred place. The Place where a good son stays is a holy place—there is no doubt about it. These are said to be sacred places; and also a king's abode (is a sacred place).

Vena said :

107b-108a. O best god, O Mādhava, being gracious through compassion tell me the characteristics of a worthy person to whom a gift should be given.

Vāsudeva said :

108b-127. O very intelligent king, listen to the good (i.e. important) marks of a worthy recipient, to whom a gift should be given by the glorious ones purified by faith. A brāhmaṇa endowed with (i.e. born in) a good family, devoted to the study of the Vedas, tranquil, restrained, one having practised penance, especially pure, intelligent, wise, engrossed in the worship of deities, truthful, of a great religious merit, Viṣṇu's devotee, and learned, knowing religion, free from greediness, and avoided by heretics, is said to be a worthy recipient. O best man, O great king, other worthy recipients are these: sister's son—the best man, endowed with qualities like these; daughter's son; son-in-law having similar dispositions; also, O best man, a preceptor who is initiated. These are worthy recipients, fit for presenting gifts. One should avoid a brāhmaṇa who possessed conduct as laid down in the Vedas (yet) is not content. Also one should avoid a one-eyed or very dark-blue (brāhmaṇa), (a brāhmaṇa) who has black teeth, or has dark-blue or yellow teeth. O king, one should avoid a brāhmaṇa who has slaughtered a cow, who has very black teeth, who is a barbarian or is licentious or is short of a limb or has an extra one; also a lepor or one having bad nails,

or bad skin; also a bald-headed brāhmaṇa, O great king. One should not give a gift to a brāhmaṇa, even if he is like Brahmā, if his wife is engaged in imporper (acts). O you highly intelligent one, a gift should not be given to a brāhmaṇa who is conquered by (i.e. under the thumb of) his wife, and also to him who is a traitor to his own school of the Vedas (Śākhā). O king, a gift should not be given to a diseased brāhmaṇa, or who eats the dead (i.e. meat eater). A gift should not be given to (a brāhmaṇa who is) a thief even though he is like Atri. A gift should not be given to a brāhmaṇa who is not content. One should also avoid a brāhmaṇa (doing rites) relating to a dead body. A gift should not be given to (a brāhmaṇa who is) very obstinate, and especially to a brāhmaṇa who is dishonest. O lord of kings, a brāhmaṇa, following Vedic practices, but void of good conduct, would not be proper at (the offering of) a śrāddha, or (giving) a gift. Now I shall tell you about the gift which is fruitful and meritorious. Faith is produced by association with a holy place and worthy recipients and (practising charity at an auspicious) time. There is no religious merit like faith, there is no happiness like faith for beings in the worldly existence, O king. A man should remember me with faith, O best king; a king should give even a small gift into the hand of a worthy recipient. He obtains an unlimited fruit of such a gift (given) according to the proper procedure; he would be happy by my grace.

CHAPTER FORTY

The Fruit of Occasional Charity

Vena said :

1-2. O god, I have heard from you the fruit of regular charity. By your grace (i.e. be gracious and) carefully tell me that fruit which is the fruit of occasional charity. I am not getting great satisfaction; my faith prompts me to hear it.

Viṣṇu said :

3-8a. O best king, I shall explain to you (gifts given called) the occasional. Listen to the fruit of the gifts given to worthy recipients by a person with faith, on a great parvan day. O best king, he, the best man, who gives an elephant, a chariot or a horse (to a brāhmaṇa) becomes the best king, accompanied by servants, in a holy country, O great king; there is no doubt about this. The religious-minded, powerful and very intelligent one becomes a very lustrous king and is unconquered by all beings. O great king, he, who gives a gift of land or a cow when the great parvan (day) arrives, would become the lord of all enjoyments. One should give a gift to a very meritorious brāhmaṇa with great care.

8b-11a. I shall tell you the characteristics of great gifts which a man gives at a sacred place on a parvan (day) : he becomes a king. He who gives a secret gift (to a brāhmaṇa) at a holy place on a parvan (day), quickly has an imperishable attainment of treasures (i.e. obtains imperishable treasures). When a great parvan (day) comes, (a man should give) a great gift with a garment and gold to a brāhmaṇa at sacred places.

11b-29a. O king, I shall tell you (about) the auspicious fruit of that gift : (to him) many very virtuous sons, proficient in the Vedas, long-lived, having progeny, and endowed with glory and merit are born. Many (such sons) are born. O you very intelligent one, ample wealth (also comes to him). He gets happiness and religious merit. He becomes religious. When the great parvan (day) arrives, a (man), having gone to a holy place with great effort, should present a golden cow to a glorious brāhmaṇa. O you very intelligent one, I shall tell you about the religious merit of (i.e. obtained by giving) that gift. O great king, the giver of a tawny cow enjoys all pleasures. He lives there as long as Brahmā would live. O king of kings, I (shall) tell you about the fruit and enjoyment of (i.e. due to) the gift of a cow given after adorning her, furnishing her with gold and with garments, ornaments and decorations. Ample glory full of gifts and enjoyments is produced. It is said that such a man (i.e. he who gives gifts) becoming a master of knowledge, would become a devotee of Viṣṇu. He would reside in Viṣṇu's world as long as the earth

would remain. He, who, after going to a sacred place, would give an ornament to a brāhmaṇa, sports with Indra after having enjoyed many pleasures. He, who, endowed with faith, gives to the best brāhmaṇa, a deserving recipient, food along with land when a great parvan (day) arrives, having valour equal to that of Viṣṇu rejoices in Vaikuṇṭha. Giving (i.e. he who gives), according to his desire, gold along with garments to a brāhmaṇa for peace, he, resembling fire, would live happily in heaven. He should fill a big golden pitcher with ghee. He should adorn it with garments and garlands and cover it with (a) silver (lid). He should furnish it with a garland of flowers and make it adorned with a sacred thread. O highly intelligent one, worshipping it, consecrated with Vedic hymns, he should (then) worship it with sixteen pure articles of worship. Then well-adorning it, he should present it to a glorious brāhmaṇa. He should then give sixteen cows with bell-metal udders, along with garments; (he should) also (give) four (cows) and a gift (to a brāhmaṇa) along with gold. He should also give twelve cows adorned with garments, ornaments and decorations to a separated (living in a lonely place?) brāhmaṇa. There is no doubt about this. O prince, such and other gifts (should be given). Having properly found a sacred place and (the proper) time, and a brāhmaṇa's residence, he should give (gifts) with faith. That would lead to great religious merit. There is no doubt about it.

Viṣṇu said :

29b-46. A gift should be arranged (i.e. given) dedicating it to Viṣṇu. A man inspired by the feeling of love for that gift gets a fruit like that. There is no doubt about this. Now I shall explain good fortune. By giving the gift which proceeds (i.e. is given) in sacrifices etc., and even by having faith in (giving it), a man has increase in his intellect and does not get unhappiness, O best brāhmaṇa. The religious-minded one, while alive, enjoys pleasures properly. That donor, having obtained a divine position, enjoys pleasures of Indra. He takes his family to heaven for a thousand kalpas. I have thus explained (gifts) leading to good fortune. Now among the (gifts) I shall tell about (the gift to be given at the time of death). Knowing that the end of the body

(i.e. death) has come near, and being afflicted by old age, he should give a gift. He should not entertain (any) hope about any one. (He should not entertain thoughts like:) 'What will happen to my sons, other relatives and friends in my absence after my death?' A man deluded by infatuation for them, does not give anything. He, with his mind confused, dies; friends and relatives weep (for him). All of them, afflicted by grief and by false attachment, resolve (to give) gifts, and reflect upon salvation. When he is dead, and when the false attachment is over, they, of greedy minds, forget the gifts and never give them, O great king. The one, O great king, who is dead, is extremely unhappy on the path to (the abode of) Yama, is overcome with thirst and hunger, and afflicted by gifts. O best king, to whom do sons and grandsons belong? To whom does the wife belong? In this worldly existence none belongs to none (else). Therefore gifts are given. O best king, O you highly intelligent one, a wise man should himself give food, drink, tāmbūla, water, gold, a pair (of) garments, an umbrella, many water-vessels with water, varied vehicles and carriages, various kinds of perfumes and camphor. If he would desire (if he desires) much happiness he should give (to a brāhmaṇa) shoes that give comfort on the path to (the abode of) Yama. O great king, by (giving) these gifts a man goes happily along Yama's path.

CHAPTER FORTYONE

The Story of Sukalā

Vena said :

1. Tell me how the son (or) the wife (or) the father (or) the mother is a holy place. Tell me also in detail how one's preceptor is a holy place.

Śrī Viṣṇu said :

2-8. There was a great city (named) Vārāṇasī along with (i.e. on the bank of) Gaṅgā. In it lived a vaiśya by name Kṛkala.

His wife, named Sukalā, was very chaste, devoted to her husband, always engaged in religious practices, and loyal to her husband. Her limbs were auspicious. She had a good son and she was charming and auspicious. She spoke the truth, she was always pure, she had a lovable form, and was dear to her husband. She, endowed with these qualities, was fortunate, and performed good deeds. The vaiśya (i.e. Kṛkala) was an excellent man; he knew various religious practices, was wise and virtuous. He was always intent upon listening to the Purāṇas and religious practices as told by the scriptures. With faith he set out, with the caravan of brāhmaṇas on a pilgrimage, meritorious and auspicious. He proceeded on the religious path (of the pilgrimage). The chaste wife (i.e. Sukalā), being stupefied by her love for her husband, said (these) words to her husband.

Sukalā said :

9-19a. O dear, I am your religiously wedded wife, and practise merit with you. Waiting (i.e. looking) for the path of (i.e. followed by) my husband, I propitiate the god i.e. my husband. O best brāhmaṇa, I shall never give up your proximity. Resorting to your shadow, I shall practise the excellent mode of behaviour called loyalty to my husband, which destroys the sins of women and gives them a good position. The woman, who would be solely devoted to her husband, is called meritorious. Except the husband, no other holy place befits young women, and no other holy place gives them heaven or salvation. O best one, a woman should look upon the right foot of her husband as Prayāga, and the left one as Puṣkara. Merit is produced by taking bath with the water (falling) from his feet. It is like taking a bath at Prayāga or Puṣkara. There is no doubt about it. The husband is full of all holy places. The husband is full of all religious merit. All that fruit—the religious merit, which an initiated man gets after the performance of sacrifices, is obtained by a wife through serving her husband. She obtains, through serving her husband that fruit which would accrue to one by having had pilgrimage to excellent holy places like Gayā. I am telling it in brief. Listen to me who am telling it. For them (i.e. for women) there is no other duty than serving the husband. Therefore, O dear one, I, helping you and giving you pleasure, shall, by

resorting to your shadow (i.e. by following you), come (with you). This will not be otherwise.

Viṣṇu said :

19b-29a. Kṛkala, having considered her beauty, character, virtue and devotion and having again and again given a thought to her delicacy (thought): 'If like this (i.e. as she says) I shall take her (with me) along the difficult path causing great grief, her beauty will wither due to being shaken by cold and heat. Her body, of an excellent complexion, is like the interior of a lotus. It will be dark due to the cold stormy gale. The path is rough and has (i.e. is full of) stones. Her feet are very delicate. She will meet with severe pain; therefore she is unable to go (i.e. I cannot take her). What will be her plight, when her body would be encompassed by hunger and thirst? This woman of a beautiful body is my support. (This) woman of a beautiful face is the abode of my pleasure. She is always dear to my life. She is always the abode of religious merit. When this young woman will perish, I shall (also certainly) perish in this world. This one is always my livelihood. She is the ruler of my life. I shall not take her to the forest (and) to the holy place. I shall (just) go all alone.' The glorious Kṛkala thought (like this) for a moment. O best king, she knew (i.e. read) the thought in his mind. The glorious one again said to her husband who had started: "O best one, listen, men should not leave (back) their innocent wives. O you highly intelligent one, this is the root of Dharma (duty, righteousness) of a man. Realising this, O illustrious one, now take me (with you)".

Viṣṇu said :

29b-32a. Having heard all those many words uttered by his beloved (wife), Kṛkala laughed and again said to her : "O dear one, the wife who is religiously obtained is not to be abandoned. O you of a beautiful face, he, who has abandoned his well-behaved and religious wife, has even given up the Dharma of ten constituents.[1] Therefore, well-being to you, O dear one, I shall never abandon you".

1. Daśāṅga Dharma—The ten constituents of Dharma as mentioned in the Vāmana Purāṇa (14.1-2) are: harmlessness, truthfulness, non-stealing, charity, forbearance, restraint, quiescence, not demeaning oneself, purity and penance.

Viṣṇu said :

32b-50a. Having thus spoken to her, and having repeatedly advised his wife, he went with the caravan without her knowledge. When thus that glorious Kṛkala had left, the lady of an auspicious face did not at all see her husband Kṛkala, of meritorious deeds, at the auspicious time of the worship of deities and at (other) auspicious time. Weeping, and very much afflicted, oppressed by grief and sorrow for her husband, she quickly got up and asked her friends. (She said to them:) "O you illustrious ones, have you seen that Kṛkala, the lord of my life? He has gone somewhere. You are my relatives. O you glorious ones, if you have seen that magnanimous, very intelligent, meritorious, omniscient, truthful and wise Kṛkala of me (i.e. my husband), (then) tell me." Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) her, they said to the very intelligent one: "O you auspicious one of a good vow, your husband Kṛkala has, on the occasion of a pilgrimage, visited a sacred place. Why do you weep? Having visited a great sacred place, he will come (back), O you beautiful one." That Sukalā of a charming speech, thus addressed by the intimate persons, again went home, O king. That devout Sukalā wept piteously in agony. (She said:) "Till my husband comes, I shall sleep on a bed on the ground. I shall not eat ghee, oil, curd and milk." She gave up (eating) salt, and also (chewing) tāmbūla. O king, she also gave up (eating) sweet (things) like jaggery etc. (She said:) "Till my husband returns I shall eat once a day or will not eat anything at all. There is no doubt about this." Thus she was full of grief; she wore a single braid of hair; she put on one bodice (only), and was unclean. She also remained with only one garment (on her person). She gave out sounds like 'hā hā', sighed, and was extremely afflicted. She was parched up by the fire of separation; her body (had become) black; and she became unclean. Thus being unhappy, very much emaciated, and perturbed, and weeping day and night, she did not get sleep at night. O king, broken (down) by grief, she (even) did not feel hungry. Then (her) friends came there, and asked Sukalā. (They said:) "O Sukalā, beautiful in all limbs, why are you weeping now? O you of a beautiful face, tell (us) the cause of your grief."

Sukalā said :

50b-56a. That my righteous husband has gone for (obtaining) religious merit. He is roaming over the earth for pilgrimage. That my lord has gone after leaving me who am faultless and sinless. I am a chaste woman of good behaviour, always meritorious and loyal to my husband. That (my) husband intent on getting (i.e. visiting) a sacred place, has left me and gone. Therefore, O friends, being extremely afflicted by separation (from him) I am grieving. When a very cruel husband (like mine) leaves his dear wife and goes (away), it is better (for the wife like me) to destroy my life (i.e. to commit suicide); it is better to eat poison; it is better to enter fire; it is better to destroy (my) body. O friends, It is better to end my life; but forsaking the husband is not better. I am unable to put up with the ever-terrible separation from him. O friends, I am always afflicted by that separation.

The friends said :

56b-60. Your lord, your husband, who has gone on a pilgrimage, will come (back). You are unnecessarily drying up your body, you are grieving in vain. O young lady, you are tormenting yourself to no purpose; you are uselessly giving up pleasures. Drink drinks, enjoy (the fruit of) what you yourself have given before. Whose is the husband? (i.e. to whom does the husband belong?) To whom do the sons, relatives and kinsmen belong? In this mundane existence nobody belongs to anybody else. One has connection with none else. (People) eat, enjoy. O young lady, that is (just) the fruit of the worldly existence. When a being is dead, who would enjoy or see its fruit? O young lady, what (people) drink, enjoy is the fruit (that is got) from the worldly existence.

Sukalā said :

61-83. Whatever you have said is not approved by the Vedas; but that woman, who, separated from her husband, always lives all alone, would be a sinful one. Good people do not honour her. In the Vedas she is always said to be with her husband. A relation is produced due to the power of religious merit.

In the scriptures the husband is always described as the sacred place for women. She should always invoke him by means of speech, body and deeds. Intent upon truthful thoughts, she should always mentally worship him. The side of the husband—(especially) his right side— is always a great holy place. When a woman, having resorted to him, lives in the house, she gets the fruit of the gifts which he gives and the merit (he collects) when he performs a sacrifice, and the fruit that he gets (by bathing) at Vārāṇasi in Gaṅgā, or at Puṣkara, or at Dvārakā or at Avanti, or Kedāra at (the temple of) Śiva; (and) not that woman who always performs sacrifices. O friends, such a fruit she never obtains. (By resorting to her husband) the woman of an excellent complexion always obtains a beautiful face, good fortune in the form of a son, bath, gifts, decorations, garments, ornaments, good fortune (in the form of her husband being alive), form, lustre, glory, fame and merit. There is no doubt that she gets all (this) through the grace of her husband. When a woman, when her husband is alive, practises another mode of life (than the one that is prescribed), (all that) becomes fruitless, and she is called an unchaste woman. On the globe (i.e. the earth) the youth, beauty and form of women is certainly said to be for the husband alone. A wife is said to be one who has good sons and good reputation. There is no doubt that when the husband is pleased in the existence, the wife is pleasing to the sight. If on the globe there would be a wife without (i.e. segregated from) her husband, how can she have happiness, beauty, glory, fame and sons on the earth? She experiences great misfortune and unhappiness in the worldly existence. She would always be sinful and would behave unpleasantly. When her husband is pleased with her, all the deities are pleased. When her husband is pleased, sages, gods and men are pleased (with her). The husband is the lord, the husband is the preceptor, the husband is the deity along with other deities. O prince, the husband is a holy place, and (is) sacred for the wives (i.e. the wife). He is also her sentiment of love, ornament, form, complexion and fragrance. She puts on an elegant dress, ornaments (etc.) except on the auspicious parvan days; she shines with elegant dresses and ornaments when her husband is (with her). Without the husband she is like milk in the mouth of a serpent. The glorious, charming

and auspicious wife practises good vow for her husband (only). If a woman puts on an elegant dress (etc.) when her husband is dead, all her beauty, complexion (etc.) is reduced to the form of a dead body. People call her a prostitute on the earth. Therefore, listen, that woman who desires great happiness on the earth, should never remain without her husband. The husband is described in the scriptures to be the highest Dharma of the wife. Therefore, a wife should not abandon that eternal Dharma. This, I know, to be the Dharma. How would (my) husband forsake (me)? In this connection, O friends, an ancient account is heard. It is the meritorious account of Sudevā, that (i.e. listening to which) destroys sins.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

Ikṣvāku Goes Ahunting

The friends said :

1. Who is that Sudevā about whom you talked? Tell us as to how she behaved. You have told (about her). Tell us the truth.

Sukalā said :

2-7a. The great, glorious king, Manu's son, Ikṣvāku by name, lived in Ayodhyā. He knew the rules of conduct; he was exclusively devoted to religious ends; he knew everything, and he honoured gods and brāhmaṇas; his wife was ever meritorious and devoted to her husband. With her he performed many sacrifices and (visited) various holy places. Sudevā, devoted to truthful conduct, was the daughter of Vedarāja, the brave and illustrious king of Kāśī. King Ikṣvāku married her. Sudevā was beautiful in all limbs, and was devoted to the vow of truth. With her, his beloved, the best king, the meritorious leader of people, enjoyed.

7b-17. Once that great king went with her to a forest. Having reached a forest (on the bank) of Gaṅgā, he always enjoyed hunting, (by) killing lions, boars, elephants and buffaloes. In front of him, who was (thus) sporting, a boar, adorned with (i.e. accompanied by) a large herd of boars and (his) sons and grandsons, arrived. His only beloved female hog remained by his side. With (other) boars and hogs she surrounded him only. The hog, seeing the king of kings who was difficult to conquer and who was engaged in hunting, remained very courageously with his wife and by his sons, grandsons, elders and young ones after having taken the shelter of a mountain. O great king, knowing the great slaughter of those beasts (in the forest), the hog said to his sons, grandsons and wife : "O darling, the very powerful and brave lord of Kosala, Manu's son, is enjoying hunting, and is destroying many beasts. There is no doubt that the great king, after seeing me, will come here. I have certainly no danger to my life from other hunters; (but) the king, seeing my form, will not forgive me. O dear one, there is no doubt that he, the very lustrous one, full of great joy, with arrows in his hand, holding a bow, accompanied by dogs and surrounded by hunters, will kill me."

The female hog said :

18-19. O dear one, whenever, in this great forest, you see many hunters equipped with many weapons, you give up your great courage, power and valour, and with your heart dejected through great fear, run away, along with these my sons and grandsons. (Now) seeing this lord of kings and the best of men, what will you do? O dear one, tell me the reason.

20-32. Hearing her words, the boar, the king of hogs, gave the (following) answer to her: "O dear one, listen why I am afraid of a great hunter and go away. Hearing the (sound of) hogs, the great hunters, who are sinful and cunning, commit evils in the inaccessible caves of the mountain. They all are always wicked, always conceive many sins, and are born in the families of sinners. I am scared of dying at their hands; (for) though I die (after being shot by them), I shall again go to a sinful (existence). O darling, scared of an untimely death, I shall go away to a mountain or a mountain-cave. This king, greater than the world, a king of the nature of Viṣṇu, has come.

O dear one, on the battlefield I shall fight with valour and bravery with the glorious one. If, by means of my own lustre I shall conquer the king, I shall enjoy incomparable fame on the earth. (If I am) killed in the battle by that best hero, I shall go to Viṣṇu's heaven. The lord of the earth will be highly satisfied with the flesh and marrow of my body. Due to him the deities of the good worlds will be gratified. This one, with the thunderbolt in his hand, has come. O beautiful one, when I meet with death at his hands, it will be a gain and excellent fame for me. Due to him I shall have glory on the earth and in the three worlds; (and) I (shall) go to Viṣṇu's world. I was not scared like this; I went agitated, (so) I went to the mountain-peaks. I went there as I was afraid of a sinful (hunter), O dear one; (and) on seeing (this king practising) piety, I have remained (here). I do not know my former sin, committed in another (i.e. former) existence, by the accumulation of which, I went to (i.e. was born in) the species of hogs. I shall (now) wash the former, terrible accumulation of sins with the water of hundreds of very sharp and whetted arrows. O you female hog, giving up your love for me, and taking with you our sons, grandsons, daughters and children in the family, go to the mountain, Give up your folly (i.e. foolish love) for me. This Viṣṇu has come. By his hand (i.e. killed by him) I shall go to that highest position of Viṣṇu. Fortune also has laid open the gates of heaven for me. I shall go to the best heaven."

Sukalā said :

33. O friends, having heard those words of the magnanimous hog, his beloved, with her heart sinking, then spoke.

The female hog said :

34-51. The herd, of which you are the lord, (shines) being adorned by sons, grandsons, friends, brothers and other kinsmen and relatives. The herd, adorned by you only, shines. O you glorious one, what will be the condition of this herd without you? O dear one, due to your power only these roaring boars, my young sons, roam on the mountain. Fearless on account of your lustre, they eat well the bulbs and roots. Due to your lustre,

they are not very much scared of lions and men in inaccessible places, forest-bowers, villages and cities and on this mountain, as they are protected by your lustre, O you very valorous one. Abandoned by you, all these young sons of me will be afflicted, confounded and senseless. All these young ones will never see (i.e. have) a happy course after going (from here). A beautiful woman does not at all look charming without her husband. (Even though she is) decorated with divine, golden ornaments, garments, food, clothes, father, mother, brothers and sisters, mother-in-law, father-in-law and others, she does not shine without her husband, as the night without the moon, (or) a family without a son (does not shine), (or) as a house without a lamp never shines. Similarly, O you, who cut off (i.e. remove) the pride (of your enemies), the herd does not at all shine without you. As a man does not shine without (good) behaviour, (or) an ascetic does not shine without knowledge, (or) as a king does not shine without (good) counsel, in the same way this (herd) does not shine (without you). As a boat full (of goods) does not (go on well) in an ocean without a fisherman, (or) as a caravan does not (shine) without its leader, similarly this (herd) does not (shine without you). As an army does not shine without a general, similarly this army of hogs (does not shine) without you, O you highly intelligent one. It will be helpless like a brāhmaṇa without (the study of) the Veda. Having entrusted the responsibility of the family to me you are going (to fight). Knowing that death is easy (i.e. would come easily) how are you having such a pledge? O dear lord, I shall not be able to sustain my life without you. O you highly intelligent one, with you alone I shall enjoy heaven, earth or even hell. I am telling you the truth and the truth only. O lord of the herd, we two—you and I—taking the sons and grandsons and the excellent herd (with us) shall go to an inaccessible place with a big cave. One goes to fight (only) after abandoning (i.e. being prepared to abandon) one's life. Tell me now what gain will there be in death (i.e. dying at the hands of the king)?

The boar said :

52-60a. You do not know the excellent way of life of the brave. Now listen to it. If a warrior desiring to fight with another warrior, goes to him (and says) : 'Fight with me, I have come

(here) to fight (with you)', (and if the man) does not give (i.e. is not ready to have) a fight with (that) other man through desire, greed or delusion, then, listen, O dear one, he would dwell in the Kumbhīpāka hell for a thousand yugas. There is no doubt that it is the highest duty of kṣatriyas to fight (when challenged to fight). If the fight fought by him after going to the battlefield is won by him, he enjoys great glory and fame. If he, extremely fearless due to his valour, is killed while fighting, he obtains (i.e. goes to) the world of the brave and enjoys divine pleasures. O dear one, listen, he would dwell in the world of the brave for twenty thousand years, and during that period he is honoured with the practices of gods. There is no doubt. Here comes the brave son of Manu, asking for a fight. I must certainly give it. The welcome guest asking for a fight, and of the form of the eternal Viṣṇu has arrived. O auspicious one, I must offer him a reception in the form of a fight.

The female hog said :

60b-61a. O dear one, how shall I (be able to) see your valour when you would fight with the magnanimous king ?

61b-66. Saying so, and hurriedly calling her dear sons, she said (to them) : "O sons, listen to my words. The welcome guest in the form of the eternal Viṣṇu asking for a fight, has come. I have to go where this (my lord) will go. As long as (this my) lord, your protector, remains here, you go away to the inaccessible opening of a mountain-cave. O (my) children, live there happily, avoiding skilful hunters. I must go there only where he (i.e. my lord) will go. This your eldest brother will protect the herd. All these (your) uncles will protect you. O my good sons, leaving me (here), go away, all of you."

The sons said :

67-68. This best mountain is full of many roots, fruits and much water. There is no fear for anyone. Life is happy. You have both, all of a sudden, uttered these, fearful (words). O mother, tell us the reason for all this.

The female hog said :

69-70. This very terrible king, of the form of Kāla (i.e. god

of death) has arrived. Longing for hunting, he sports in the forest by killing many beasts. He is the very powerful and unassailable son of Manu, named Ikṣvāku. O my good sons, this (god of) death will kill (you). My good sons, go away.

The sons said :

71-73. He, who goes (away) after abandoning his mother and father is wicked-hearted. He goes to a very terrible and fearful hell. He who, after drinking the holy milk of his mother, becomes shameless and spiritless, and goes (away) leaving his mother and father, goes to a pussy hell, stinking with the bad smell of insects. Therefore, we shall leave (our) father here only, but shall take our mother (with us).

74-75. In this way depression of spirits for the sake of Dharma and Artha (moral duty and worldly interest) overcame them. All of them full of power and lustre remained after having grouped themselves into an array. Full of daring courage and energy, and with valour, they, roaring and sporting, saw (there) the king's son.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

The Boar Gives a Tough Fight to Ikṣvāku

Sukalā said :

1-8. Thus those boars stood up for fighting. The hunters stood by the king standing before them. O best king, the great hog resorted to the mountain-peak. He stood after arranging his great herd in an array. The tawny, fat, plump-bodied, irresistible hog having large fangs and mouth, roared very fearfully, O king. The great king saw them resorting to the groves of śāla and tāla. Hearing those words of them the brave son of Manu (said): "Seize the brave hog, kill him who is proud of his strength." Thus the hero, the brave son of Manu, spoke to them. Then all the hunters, fascinated by the rapture of hunting became ready

and furnished with armours, and proceeded with the dogs. The great and very mighty king was full of great joy. Mounted upon a horse, he was ready with his army having four constituents. He came to the bank of Gaṅgā on the best mountain Meru, full of gems and minerals and adorned with various kinds of trees.

Sukalā said :

9-19. (He came to the mountain) which best mountain, having the heap of the rays of the sun, was very lofty and high, had reached the sky itself, was beautified by many elephants that moved (on it); which shone with pure drops of water, resembling pearls, (and caused by) waves and ripples on the banks, rising from the pure stream of the Gaṅgā due to the crowds of people. The best mountain with its white slabs of stone washed everywhere, was endowed with excellent beauty. Surrounded (i.e. covered) by gods, Cāraṇas, Kinnaras and Gandharvas, Vidyādharas, Siddhas, bevies of celestial nymphs, sages, best elephants, Vidyādharas the mountain shone with (trees) like śrīkhaṇḍa, candana, sarala, śāla, tamāla, rudrākṣa, and desire-yielding trees giving divine powers. It was variegated with minerals of various kinds. It shone with aerial cars, variegated with various gems, with golden staffs and wives (i.e. women). It shone by the groves of coconut trees and divine betal-nut trees. It was adorned with flowers of divine white lotuses, bakula, and decorated with pieces of plantain trees, (also) with campaka-flowers. The mountain was decorated with reddish ketaka-flowers, and also the extensions of many creepers and with lotuses. It was adorned with beautiful flowers of many colours and with various trees. It was full of divine trees and crystal-slabs. It shone with the meditating saints, best meditating saints who had attained divine powers and who lived in its caves; and also with charming streams and many fountains. The mountain shone with the confluences bristling with the streams of rivers. The lord of mountains looked beautiful with deep lakes, small pools, having pure water and with peaks standing together. It was adorned with śarabhas, tigers and herds of deer. That lord of mountains always shone with highly intoxicated elephants, buffaloes and the ruru deer, and also with many divine substances.

20-22. Manu's son, the brave lord of Ayodhyā, (named)

Ikṣvāku, (was there) with his wife and the army having four constituents. In front (of him) the brave hunters and the fast dogs were going to the place where the brave, strong boar (remained) with his wife. He remained, after having resorted to the bank of Gaṅgā on the Meru-land, protected by many old and young hogs.

Sukalā said :

23-27. The delighted hog said to her very dear wife : "O dear one, see, the mighty lord of the Kośala country has come. The king is having the sport of hunting with me as the target. I shall just have the battle delighting gods and demons." Then the very lustrous king, the archer with arrows in his hands, who was delighted, said to (his wife) Sudevā, of a truthful behaviour : "O darling, see the very powerful, roaring hog, accompanied by his attendants and irresistible for the hunters. O dear one, today only I shall kill him with good, sharp arrows. The very brave one will come to me only to fight (with me)."

28-31. The pleasing, brave (king), speaking thus to his wife, said to the hunters : "O very brave ones, urge on the hog." The brave ones, having power, lustre and valour, and roaring, ran fast. All of them went to the hog with the speed of wind. The foresters pierced the hog of a brave form with volleys of sharp arrows and various weapons and missiles.

Sukalā said :

32-35. Arrows and javelins were discharged by the hunters; the arrows (discharged by them) showered on the mountain as clouds would shower on the earth. Struck by (hunters) giving strong strokes, the hog, the protector of the herd, who had gone to fight, was completely vanquished by hundred (of hunters). With his sons and grandsons he would destroy (i.e. he destroyed) his enemies. The hunters struck by his fang in the war fell down. Due to his speedy whirlings the hands and feet of a steady (person) dropped down. The hog saw the roar of (i.e. the roaring) hunter coming to him; and the lustre on his face was destroyed when struck with his fang. He went to the place where the king was. He (i.e. the king) did not want to fight. The lordly hog very much resisted and frightened the lord of the Ikṣvākus and was

angry. Delighted with fighting, he desired to fight with Ikṣvāku (king) in the forest.

36-43. The hog skilled in fighting again desired to fight (with Ikṣvāku). The angry hog, shaking the earth with the front part of his mouth, sharp teeth and claws, and proudly making the huṁkāra sound, struck the sinless king. O king, finding him to have the valour like that of Viṣṇu, the son of Manu was thrilled with joy. The divine king, seeing the valour of the boar regarded him like Yama. Thinking that he was the enemy of gods in the form of a hog, and seeing the very powerful and huge opposing army, he suddenly collected (his army) for the destruction of the boar. He sent elephants, speedy chariots and hunters holding arrows and swords along with (missiles called) bhuśuṇḍi and mallets and having nooses in their hands. They were delighted and aimed at him. The horses and elephants that had gone to him, though warded off, remained (there only). At places he was seen, at places he was not seen. At times he would show (i.e. cause) fear, at times he would crush the horses. The hog, invincible in the battle, and with his eyes red due to anger, crushed the brave soldiers and made an inviolable sound. The brave lord of Kośala, seeing that boar, fighting, unconquerable in war, of a huge body and giving out a sound (i.e. thundering) like the clouds, roared; moved on the battlefield; and the brave one illumined the heroes with his own lustre. The fangs in his (i.e. the hog's) mouth shone and flashed like lightning. The son of Manu saw the hog in that condition, and pierced him with sharp arrows, and each one of the rest was pierced by his relatives (i.e. fellow-warriors).

44. The king said : "O (my) armies (i.e. my soldiers), why should you, who are brave, not seize him through your prowess? (Just) fight there with him with (your) whetted and sharp arrows."

45-59. Hearing the words of that noble one who was angry, all the soldiers stood together to fight. Many thousands of warriors, struck in all directions, and pierced the hog in battle, who had remained on the battlefield. On the battlefield, he was pierced with volleys of arrows by certain huge excellent warriors. The mighty ones hit the hog difficult to conquer in battle with the strokes of discs and throws of bolts. Then the angry hog having

bravely cut off the nooses, remained in the battlefield. He went forth along with great boars. Then the brave hog, wet with the streams of blood, struck with his mouth and cut off the horses and elephants of the brave (soldiers). Angrily he struck the brave footsoldiers with the sharp fore-part of his fang. Being angry he struck the trunk of an elephant and being delighted, hit, with the nails of his toes, the warriors that were struck (down). Then all the hogs and hunters, with their eyes red with anger, resorting to fighting, fought with one another. The boars were killed by the hunters, and many hunters were killed by the boars. Being struck and red with blood, they dropped on the ground. The boars, giving up (i.e. at the cost of) their life, killed the hunters, and they fell on the battlefield. There the boars died and dogs gave up their life (i.e. died). Here and there, the hunters that were dead (i.e. that were killed), lay on the ground. The king, with the strokes of his sword, killed many boars. Some boars fled away; some were killed; some, being frightened, resorted to inaccessible places, bowers and interiors of caves, O best king. Some hunters, pierced by hogs with the tips of their fangs, and some, cut off into pieces, died and went to heaven. On all sides snares, nooses, traps and tubular organs of the body had fallen here and there. The hog, proud of his strength, remained only with his wife and five or seven grandsons (ready) to fight. The female hog again spoke to that hog, dear to her :"O dear one, with me and these children move (to a safe place)."

60-77a. The pleased hog said to his very dear wife, who was afflicted : "Broken (like this) where shall I go ? (Now) there is no place (for me) on the earth. When I run away, the herd of boars will perish. A hog drinks water by (remaining) between two lions; (but) a lion does (i.e. can) not drink water by (remaining) between two hogs. Thus excellent power is observed in the species of boars. Therefore I shall kill (the enemies); when broken I shall go (away). O you glorious one, I know piety causing many auspicious results. When a man, who is fighting, flees, leaving the holy battlefield through greed or fear, he would be a sinner. There is no doubt about it. He (who) is delighted at seeing the array of sharp arms, dives into the divine river and goes to the other end of the holy place. He goes to Viṣṇu's world, and would, emancipate the men (of his family). When now that

(fight) has come by, how should I, being broken, go (away from it)? Listen to the fruit of him (i.e. which he gets), who, on seeing the battle, crowded with weapons, and giving delight to great heroes, is delighted and goes forth (to fight). For him a great (i.e. sacred) bath in Bhāgīrathī is had at every step. O dear one, (now) listen (to the description of him), who, fleeing from the battle through greed, goes home. He would manifest his mother's blemish, and is called a woman. O dear one, here (i.e. in a battle) are present sacrifices and holy places. Here (i.e. in a battle), gods of great prowess, sages, Siddhas and Cāraṇas witness (things creating) delight. All the three worlds are present there, where the heroes present themselves. The inhabitants of the three worlds watch him who has fled from the battle(-field), and curse and again and again laugh at the shameless sinner. King Dharma (i.e. Yama) would put him to pain (i.e. inflict pain upon him). There is no doubt about it. He, who faces (the enemy) and would drink blood from his own head (i.e. whose head would bleed while fighting), obtains the fruit of performing a horse-sacrifice and goes to Indra's heaven. There is no doubt that when the brave one conquers his enemies in a battle, he enjoys glory and many pleasures, O you beautiful one. When, unsupported (i.e. all alone) he, facing (his enemy), gives up his life, he would go to the highest place, and enjoys a divine maiden. Thus I know piety; how should I flee (from battle) and go (away)? There is no doubt that on the battle-field I shall fight with this courageous Ikṣvāku-king, the son of Manu. O you beautiful one, take these young ones with you, and go. Live happily."

77b-82. Hearing the words of him, she said : "I am bound by your bonds, called the sentiment of love, and which are the playthings of joy, O dear one. O you, who remove the pride (of others), with my sons I shall cast my life in front of you." Thus the two desiring the good of each other, and having well conversed with each other, decided to fight, and observed the enemies, (and) the very intelligent, brave Ikṣvāku, the lord of Kośala. As the cloud thunders in the sky in the rainy season, he roared along with his beloved and would challenge (i.e. challenged), with the tips of his hoofs, the excellent king. The noble one saw the roaring hog, endowed with valour. The courageous

king, with a horse's speed, moved forward facing him (i.e. the hog).

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

The Boar Dies Fighting

Sukalā said :

1-2. Seeing his own irresistible army completely vanquished by him (i.e. by the hog) who was difficult to be stopped, the king got angry with the cruel, unbearable hog. He, mounted upon a horse, and taking a bow and an arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world, speedily moved in front of him.

3-7. When the lord of the herd of boars saw the king, the killer of his enemies, mounted upon the back of a horse and endowed with excellent valour, he went forth to him on the battlefield. The best hog, when struck with a sharp arrow of (i.e. by) the king, went to the soles of the feet of the horse. With a quick mind (i.e. decision) he overstepped him with a very sharp speed. The horse was afflicted by the hog. The hog did not go to (i.e. fall on) the ground. The horse, with his movement checked, and struck on the face, fell down on the ground. Then the king just went to (i.e. got into) a small chariot. He roared with sounds of (i.e. befitting) the species of a hog. The hog, who was in the midst of the battlefield, was speedily struck with a mace by the Kośala-king seated in his chariot; and then giving up his body, he just went to the excellent abode of Viṣṇu.

8-11. When the lord of hogs after fighting with the king in the battle, fell on the ground after being struck (by the king), best gods showered excellent flowers on him. On him a great heap of flowers was accumulated and the fragrance was as it were of the Santānaka flowers. Gods, being fully pleased, showered on him sandal with saffron. Being pondered over by the king, O king, he became one having four hands. He had (on his person) divine garments. His form was divine, and with his lustre he shone as the sun (shines). When, he being greatly honoured by the king of gods and (other) gods, went to heaven in a divine car,

he, casting his former body here only, again became the lord of Gandharvas.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

The Female Hog Fights Back

Sukalā said :

1. Then all the hunters with nooses in their hands went to the female hog. Also the brave, fearful, terrible (dogs) came (to her).

2-8. Seeing her dear (husband) killed along with the family in the great war, the female hog took her four children (i.e. young ones) and remained (there). (She thought:) 'My husband got what he had thought (i.e. desired). He is honoured by sages and gods. The noble one has gone to heaven by means of (having performed) this act. I too shall go along the same path to heaven. The lord (i.e. my husband) waits (there for me).' Having well determined (like this) she thought about her sons: 'When my four sons, sustaining (i.e. continuing) our race live here, the noble, very brave hog also will have (the best position in heaven). By what means shall I protect my sons?' Thus being engrossed in thinking, and seeing the narrow passage on the mountain, she tried to find out an extensive (i.e. wide) path to go out. Having made up her mind about her sons, O great king, she said to those sons who were very much confused: "O sons, as long as I am (alive), go (away) quickly."

9-11. Out of them the eldest son (said): "How shall I with a strong desire to save my life go away abandoning my mother? How pitiable is my mother's good life? I shall retaliate my father's enmity. I shall overpower (my) enemies in the battle. He, who takes the three younger brothers to a mountain-cave by abandon-

ing the father and the mother, is of a sinful mind. He goes only to hell crowded with crores of worms."

12-15. She, very much afflicted, said to him: "O son, how shall I, the great sinner, go by abandoning you (here)? (i.e. I shall be a great sinner if I abandon you here.) Let my three (younger) sons (only) go away (from here)." (Then) the three younger sons only went into the interior of the forest. When they were just witnessing, the two (i.e. the mother and the eldest son) again and again, roaring due to their lustre and great strength, went to the battlefield.

16-18. Then the hunters, having the speed of wind, came (there). O king, the three (younger sons) were sent (by her) along the difficult path; and the two—the mother and the (eldest) son, remained there by blocking the path. Then the hunters, holding swords, arrows and bows came there and struck (them) with javelins, sharp discs and pestles. Keeping his mother at the back, the son fought with them. He struck some with his fang; he hit some with his mouth. He also struck with the tips of his hoofs. The brave ones fell in the battle. The hog fought in the battle. The noble king saw him.

19-23. Knowing that he was brave like his father, the very lustrous, brave son of Manu, with arrows in his hand went in front of him. Struck by the noble (Ikṣvāku) king with a sharp crescent-shaped arrow, and with his chest pierced, he fell on the ground (i.e. the hog fell dead on the ground). She became very insensible due to (the death of) her son; she herself went towards him. O king, some brave hunters, hit by her with the strokes of her mouth, fell on the ground, and some fled (away) and some died. Then the female hog causing to flee (that) great army with her fang, appeared as (if) a female destructive deity, causing great fear, had sprung up.

24-27a. Then the queen said to him who resembled the son of the lord of gods: "O king, she has killed your large army. Tell me the reason why you are ignoring her, O dear one. To her the great king said : "I shall not kill this female (hog). O dear one, the deities have indeed seen a great sin in killing a female. Therefore one should not kill a woman. Nor shall I send anyone (to kill her). O beautiful one, I am afraid of committing a sin by killing her."

27b-31. Speaking thus, the king, the lord of the earth, ceased (to speak). A hunter by name Jhārjhara saw that female hog, creating a havoc amidst them, and irresistible even to excellent warriors. He pierced her with a very speedy and sharp arrow. She, with the arrow stuck into her (body), and covered with blood, endowed with the majesty of valour and looking charming, was hurrying. She again struck that Jhārjhara even with her mouth. Struck with a sharp sword by that Jhārjhara who was falling, she was rent asunder. Panting (heavily) due to (exertion of) the fight, she fainted, and (though) alive on the ground, she was overpowered with great grief.

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

The Story of Raṅgavidyādhara

Sukalā said :

1-3a. Seeing the female hog, who loved her sons, panting and fallen (on the ground), Sudevā, who was full of pity, went to her, who was afflicted, and having (first) sprinkled cold water over her face, she then sprinkled holy water over the entire body (who was) afflicted and resplendent with fighting. She (i.e. the female hog) spoke to her who was sprinkling.

3b-4. She spoke to the beloved (wife) of the king in a melodious human voice: "O respectable lady, may you be happy. When you sprinkled (holy water) over me, the heap of my sins left (me) by your contact and by my seeing you."

5-7. Hearing these great (i.e. significant) words (uttered) with a wonderful expression on her face (the queen said:) "I see a wonder, that you uttered words (like a human being). This one is born in the species of an animal, and clearly and elegantly speaks excellent Sanskrit with vowels and consonants (distinctly spoken) to me. She has done an excellent bold act with joy and (causing) amazement." Then the magnanimous (queen) who was there, said (these) words to her husband:

8. "O king, see, this extraordinary one who, though belon-

ging to a species of beasts, speaks great (i.e. excellent) Sanskrit, as a human being would speak."

9. Hearing that, the king, best of all the learned ones (said): "This (her speech) is wonderful and the expression on her face is (also) wonderful, which I have neither seen nor heard before."

10. Then the king spoke to that Sudevā, who was very dear to him : "O dear one, ask the auspicious one as to who she might be."

11-14. Hearing (these) words of the king, she (i.e. the queen) asked the female hog: "O good one, who are you? It is a great wonder that though born in a species of beasts you speak human language which is elegant and full of knowledge. Tell me your former acts. (Tell me) also about the noble warrior, your husband. What is the very valorous act that he did, due to which he has gone to heaven? Tell us all about you and your husband's former life." Saying so, the magnanimous beloved (wife) of the king ceased speaking.

The female hog said :

15-23a. O good lady, if you are asking about the life and former deeds of me and this noble one, I shall tell all that to you. This highly intelligent one is a Gandharva, skilled in singing. His name is Raṅgavidyādhara, and he is well-versed in all branches of knowledge. Pulastya, the very lustrous best sage, possessing brilliance, having resorted to the best mountain Meru having beautiful caves and streams, practised penance with a truthful mind. The Vidyādhara went there by his own will, O great lord. Resorting to that great mountain, he practised singing, which was accompanied by tunes and beating time, O you of a charming smile. Hearing his song, the mind of the sage was distracted from meditation. He said to that Gītavidyādhaa (or Raṅgavidyādhara), who was singing (there): "O learned one, by your very sweet, divine, holy song sung to beating time and measure, even gods are allured. This is not otherwise (i.e. it is quite true). O you of a good vow, due to your song, having (observed) the time in music, a sentiment and modulation, my mind has gone away (from) meditation. Therefore, leaving this place, (please) go to another spot."

Gītavidyādhara said :

23b-28a. Music is like spiritual knowledge; (then) why should I go to another place? I have never caused any unhappiness to anyone. I have always given happiness to people. All deities are pleased by means of this singing. O brāhmaṇa, even Śiva, delighted with the sound of a song, is brought (over here). Singing is said to be full of all emotions. Singing gives joy. All sentiments like that of love set up by singing, appear charming. The four excellent Vedas are elegant because of singing. All the deities are delighted because of singing, and not by anything else. You are censuring just that singing only, and are sending me away like this. O noble one, in this (in doing so) your injustice (i.e. injustice done by you) is noticed.

Pulastya said :

28b-35a. Today you have spoken the truth only. The meaning of a song gives much religious merit. O you very intelligent one, listen to my words; give up your pride. I am not condemning singing. I am honouring singing. It is not otherwise (i.e. I am not condemning it). The lores are fourteen[1]; together they bring about feelings. They bring success to beings through steady mind (i.e. if their minds are steady). By thinking about one (object only) penance and sacred hymns are highly successful. The great group of the organs of sense is, in my opinion, fickle. There is no doubt that leading the mind away from meditation, (i.e. even after the mind is taken away from meditation), it (again) very much takes the self to objects of sense. For this reason only, sages go to that place for the accomplishment of penance where there is no sound, no (beautiful) form or no young woman. This your singing is holy and gives great pleasure. We (i.e. I) would not look helplessly on it (since we are unable to prevent it), so, O hero, we (i.e. I) cannot remain in (this) forest. You (please) go to another place, or we (i.e. I) shall go.

Gītavidyādhara said :

35b-40. The noble one by whom is conquered the powerful group of the organs of sense is called a victor, a yogī, a brave one,

1. Vidyāḥ caturdaśa—The fourteen lores are: Four Vedas, six Aṅgas, Dharma, Mīmāṁsā, Tarka or Nyāya and the Purāṇas.

a sādhaka (one engaged in penance, spiritual practice). O you very intelligent one, he, who is not distracted from his meditation on hearing a sound or seeing a form, is a courageous (person) who accomplishes penance. Since you are void of lustre and conquered (i.e. overpowered) by organs of sense, you will not have the power to affront my singing even in heaven. All void of valour leave the forest. There is no doubt about it. O brāhmaṇa, this region of the forest is common to gods and all beings, it is as much mine as it is yours. There is no doubt about it. How (should) I go abandoning this excellent forest? You may go (or) you may stay. Whatever is to happen will not be otherwise.

41-44. After having heard these words of Gītavidyādhara, the intelligent sage thought : 'Doing what would merit accrue (to me).' Having forgiven him, the best brāhmaṇa went to another place. Always taking a posture suited to profound and abstract meditation, the righteous-minded (sage) practised penance, after giving up desire and anger, and also infatuation and greed. Thus Pulastya, the best meditating sage then remained like this, controlling all organs of sense along with his mind.

Sukalā said :

45-52. When that noble, best sage Pulastya left, that Gītavidyādhara also, ordained by destiny, thought : 'Due to my fear (i.e. fear caused by me) he is not to be seen for a long time. Where has he gone? Where does he live? What does he do and how does he do (it)?' Knowing that that son of Brahmā (i.e. Pulastya) was adorning (i.e. living in) a secluded (spot) in the forest, he (i.e. Gītavidyādhara), in the form of a hog, went to his excellent hermitage. O beautiful lady, having seen the eminent brāhmaṇa seated upon a seat, and obscured by lustrous flames, he disturbed him. With a wicked act he would certainly attack (i.e. he attacked) the brāhmaṇa with the tip of his mouth. O great king, he (i.e. Pulastya) knowing him to be a beast, pardoned him for his wicked act. He urinated before him, dropped his excrement before him, danced and sported before him, fell and again rose in front of him. O king, knowing him to be a beast, the sage let him go. When, once, he, again went (there) in the

same form, he laughed a loud laughter. He also wept there and sang melodiously.

53-54. O king, having (once) seen Gītavidyādhara like that, and having seen his acts, the meditating saint (thought): 'This might not be a hog.' He knew (i.e. recalled) his account: '(He) had disturbed me, but I had let him go taking him to be a beast. He is wicked and very cruel.'

55. The highly intelligent, best sage, realising that glorious one to be the meanest Gandharva, got angry and cursed him:

56. "Since, in the form of a hog you are disturbing me like this, therefore, O you great sinner, go to (i.e. be born in) the sinful species of a hog."

57-62. (Thus) cursed by that brāhmaṇa he went to god Indra; and O you beautiful lady, he, trembling, said to the glorious (god) : "O thousand-eyed one, listen to my words. I have carried out your mission. That best sage, who was practising a severe penance, has been disturbed and agitated by me (rendering non-efficacious his penance). I have been cursed by that brāhmaṇa. My divine form is destroyed. O Śakra, protect me who am thus reduced to the existence of a beast." Knowing the account of that Gītavidyādhara, Indra went with him and said to the sage : "O you the best one of those born of a divine power, you who know divine faculties, grant favour , O lord. O best sage, pardon this (hog) and free him from your curse." Thus requested by Indra, the brāhmaṇa, with his mind pleased said :

Pulastya said :

63-65a. O lord of gods, on your word I should pardon (him). O great king, a very powerful son of Manu will be (born). (His name will be) Ikṣvāku; he will be righteous-minded, and a protector of all religions. When this (hog) will meet his death at his (i.e. Ikṣvāku's) hands, he will get (back) his own body. There is no doubt about this.

The female hog said :

65b. I have told you all this account of the hog. Now I shall also tell my (own account). With your husband, listen to it. (I shall)

also (tell you about) the terrible sin I had committed formerly (i.e. in my former existence).

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

The Story of Vasudatta and His Daughter Sudevā

Sukalā said :

1. Sudevā, whose entire body was beautiful, said to the female hog: "How is it that you, who are born in a species of beasts, speak Sanskrit?

2. Tell me wherefrom you had such great knowledge. O you auspicious one, how do you know the account of your husband and of yourself?"

The female hog said :

3-7. Due to my being a beast I was enveloped by delusion, O you of an excellent complexion; and struck with swords and arrows, I fell on the battlefield. I was overpowered by swoon, and was unconscious, O you of an excellent face. O beautiful lady, with your pious hand you sprinkled (water on me). When my body was sprinkled over with the holy water by your hand, swoon left me and disappeared. As the darkness disappears due to lustre (i.e. light), similarly, O auspicious one, my sin disappeared due to your having sprinkled (over my body). O you of a charming body, by your favour I obtained old knowledge (i.e. knowledge of previous existence). O you auspicious one, I realised that I shall reach a holy position.

8. Listen, I shall narrate my former account. O you auspicious one (I shall tell you) what great sin, I, a sinner, had (formerly) committed.

9-12. In the great country called Kaliṅga, there was a city by name Śrīpura, which was full of all accomplishments, and was inhabited by (the people of) the four castes. There lived a certain brāhmaṇa, known as Vasudatta, who was always engaged in the duties of a brāhmaṇa, and always devoted to truthful acts. He knew the Vedas; he was erudite; he was pure, virtuous and rich.

He was full of (i.e. he had ample) wealth and grains, and was adorned (blessed) with sons and grandsons. O you auspicious lady, I am his daughter adorned (blessed) with brothers and sisters, kinsmen, relatives, ornaments and decorations, O you of a beautiful face.

13-17. My very intelligent father named me Sudevā. O you highly intelligent one, I was always dear to my father. I was matchless in beauty; and like that (i.e. like me) there was none in the (whole) world. I, of a charming smile, was puffed up with the pride of my beauty and youth. I was a maiden very beautiful and adorned with all ornaments. Seeing me, all the people—all relatives of my class (i.e. caste) solicited me in marriage, O you of a beautiful face. I (i.e. my hand) was solicited by all brāhmaṇas; (but) my father did not give me (in marriage to any brāhmaṇa). O you glorious one, the highly intelligent one (i.e. my father) was deluded through his affection (for me). That my magnanimous father did not give me (to anyone in marriage).

18-21. Youth with (all its accompanying) feelings set upon me, O you young lady. Seeing my beauty like that, my mother, being greatly afflicted, said to my father: "Why do you not give (our) daughter (in marriage to a brāhmaṇa)? O glorious one, give this daughter (in marriage) to a good, magnanimous brāhmaṇa (for) she has (now) attained youth." The best and excellent brāhmaṇa, Vasudatta, said to (my) mother: "O you noble one, listen to my words. O you of an excellent complexion, I am deluded by great fascination for (our) daughter.

22-23. O auspicious one, listen, I shall give my daughter to that son-in-law, who would be a householder. This Sudevā is dear to me like my own life. There is no doubt about it." Thus my father Sudatta spoke (to my mother).

24-27a. (There was a brāhmaṇa, who was) virtuous, pure, born in the family of Kauśika, and was well-versed in all lores, and was endowed with the qualities of brāhmaṇas. Seeing him, who did not have father and mother, who was endowed with the study of the Vedas, and who was reciting (them) melodiously, and seeing the form of him, who had come to (our) door for alms, my very intelligent father said : "Who are you? Tell me now your name; (tell me about your) family, lineage, your practices."

27b-29. Hearing (my) father's words he said to Vasudatta (my father) : "I am born in the family of Kauśika. I have, mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. My name is Śivaśarman. I do not have father and mother (i.e. I am an orphan). I have four other brothers, who have mastered the Vedas. I have thus told you (about) my family, and about the practices of my family."

30-35. Thus everything was told to my father by Śivaśarman. O you blessed one, when an auspicious time, date and the star of the deity presiding over marriage arrived, I was given (in marriage) to that brāhmaṇa by my father. With that glorious one I stayed alone in my father's house. Being very much deluded by the great wealth of my father and mother and pride, I, a sinner, did not serve my husband. O you auspicious one, I never shampooed his body through love or affection or (pleased him) with (sweet) words. A sinner that I was, I always looked at (i.e. treated) him cruelly. O auspicious one, due to my contact with unchaste women, I reached their condition. I did no good to my mother, father, husband and brothers. I went here and there.

36-38. Seeing such wicked behaviour of me, my husband, through his love for his father-in-law (and mother-in-law) my very intelligent husband did not say anything to me. I, a great sinner, was however, warded off by (the members of) my family. All those (members of the family like) my father and mother, knowing the character and goodness of Śivaśarman, were afflicted by my sin (-ful acts).

39-46. Seeing my wicked acts, my husband went out of the house. He left the country and the village and went (away) from it. When my husband had gone, my father was full of anxiety, and was afflicted with grief as one would be afflicted with a disease. My mother said to her husband (i.e. my father) who was afflicted with grief: "What for is your worry, O my dear (husband)? Tell me your worry." "O pleasing one, the brāhmaṇa, (our) son-in-law, has abandoned (our) daughter and gone. This one is of a sinful conduct, merciless and performs sinful acts. The very intelligent Śivaśarman has been forsaken by this one (only). The highly intelligent brāhmaṇa, O dear one, due to his courtesy towards our entire family and me, does not say anything at all to Sudevā. He lives peacefully and the intelli-

gent, learned man does not condemn or censure Sudevā moving wantonly. This wicked Sudevā will destroy (our) family. O you housewife, leaving her, I (shall) go."

The brāhmaṇa's wife said :

47-65. O dear one, today you have understood the virtues and the vices of (our) daughter. She has now been spoiled because of your affection and love for her. One should fondle one's son till he is five years old. O dear one, one should always nourish him with the idea of training him (even) through affection also, by giving him bath, coverings, food, (other) eatables, drinks. There is no doubt about this. O dear one, one should urge the son in (i.e. to acquire) virtues and true learning. A father is always free from affection for the sake of teaching virtues (to his son). O dear one, affections take place (i.e. should be shown) in the protection and nourishment (of the son). (A father) should never describe his son as virtuous. Everyday he should censure him. He should always talk to him (with) sternness, and should afflict him with (harsh) words, so that the son, intent upon (acquiring) learning, will pursue true knowledge. Even through a device used to correct his pride, he leaves his sin far away. Perfection in learning and virtues is produced (in him). A mother should beat her daughter, and a mother-in-law should beat her daughter-in-law. A preceptor should beat his pupil. Thus they acquire perfection, not otherwise. A wife should flog her husband, a king should punish his minister. A soldier should beat his horse, and the elephant's driver should beat him. O lord, by means of being beaten and being protected, they are prepared with a thought for training. O lord, along with the good brāhmaṇa Śivaśarman, you yourself have foreover spoilt her. In the house she was made undisciplined (i.e. was not checked); therefore, O you highly intelligent one, she is spoilt. O dear one, listen to my words: The father should keep his daughter in his house till she becomes eight years old. He should not keep a strong (i.e. grown up) one. Both the parents get the (fruit of the) sin which a daughter, living in her father's house, commits. Therefore an able (i.e. a grown up) daughter is not kept in his house (by the father). She should get nourishment in the house of him to whom she is given. She, living there, should devoutly

win over her virtuous husband. The family becomes famous; the father lives happily. The husband suffers due to the sin which she, living there (i.e. in the husband's house) commits. Living there, she always prospers with sons and grandsons. O dear one, the father obtains fame due to the good qualities of his daughter. Therefore, O dear one, one should not keep in one's house one's daughter with her husband (i.e. a married daughter). O dear one, in this context there is an account that is so heard: O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell you the account of the hero Ugrasena, the eldest Yadu, as it took place, when the great twenty-eighth Dvāpara yuga arrived. Listen to it with a concentrated mind.

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

The Story of Padmāvatī

The brāhmaṇa's wife said :

1. In the charming region of Māthura, in (the city of) Mathurā, lived the best Yādava king, the killer of his enemies, and well-known as Ugrasena.

2-7. The king knew the meaning and essentials of the whole religion; he knew the Vedas; he was learned and powerful; he was a donor, an enjoyer, an appreciator of virtues and a virtuous one. He, the intelligent one, ruled (over Māthura) and protected his subjects justly. Thus was that very lustrous and valorous Ugrasena. In the holy country of Vidarbha there lived a dignified (king named) Satyaketu. His glorious daughter, having eyes like lotuses and face like a lotus, and devoted to truthful behaviour, was Padmāvatī by name. That (Padmāvatī, the) daughter of the Vidarbha (-king) was endowed with feminine qualities and by means of her virtues based on truthfulness, she shone like another one born from the sea (i.e. like Lakṣmī). Ugrasena (the king) of the Māthura country married her, of beautiful eyes. O glorious one, with her the valorous one enjoyed himself happily. Being very much pleased with her qualities, he became happy with her (i.e. in her company).

8-9. The lord of the Māthura (country) was infatuated by her, due to her affection and love. The lucky Padmāvatī had become dearer to him than his own life. He did not eat without her, and sported with her (only). He did not at all enjoy any great pleasure without her.

10-12. O best brāhmaṇa, thus the best ones became affectionate towards each other, loved each other and gave great pleasure and joy to each other; and the glorious king of kings, Satyaketu, remembered his daughter Padmāvatī. Her mother (also) was very much afflicted. That king of Vidarbha (i.e. Satyaketu) respectfully sent his messengers to the brave king Ugrasena, O best brāhmaṇa.

13-18. The messenger said (these) words to the great king Ugrasena: "The brave lord of Vidarbha greeting you with devotion and affection, tells (i.e. informs) about his well-being, and inquires about your (well-being). O great king, Satyaketu has asked (i.e. requested) you like this : '(Please) send my daughter (to me) to see (so that I can see) her.' O lord, if you have regard for his love and affection, then send that glorious Padmāvatī, who delights you. O great king, he is very anxious and uneasy." Then, O best brāhmaṇa, having heard (these) words, the best and glorious king Ugrasena, due to love and affection for that magnanimous Satyaketu and through generosity, sent his dear wife Padmāvatī (to her father's —Satyaketu's— house).

19-27. That Padmāvatī, sent by him, was full of great joy, and went to her own former house. The charming and auspicious one saw (i.e. met the members of her) family led by her father. And she, devoted to truth, saluted her father's feet. O best brāhmaṇa, the great king, the lord of Vidarbha was full of great joy, when Padmāvatī had arrived (there). Greeted with presents and other respectful considerations, with garments, ornaments and decorations, Padmāvatī lived happily in her father's house. She lived with her friends without any apprehension. As before she at that time rejoiced in the chamber, tank and also in the palace. Having as it were become a young girl again, she stayed (there) without bashfulness. O brāhmaṇa, she always behaved without bashfulness with her friends. She, the glorious, loyal wife, full of great joy, knowing that the happiness obtained in the

father's house is difficult to be obtained in the father-in-laws's house, sported (there). Wondering longingly 'When (again) could there by enjoyment like this' the beautiful lady everyday longed for sport in the groves with her friends.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

Padmāvatī Succumbs to Gobhila's Fraudulent Approach

The brāhmaṇa's wife said :

1-9a. O you glorious one, once on the best mountain she saw a beautiful grove, adorned with groups of plantain-trees, with the śāla trees, tāla trees, tamāla trees, coconut trees, with big betelnut trees, mātuliṅga (i.e. citron) trees, orange trees, and charming jambu trees, with auspicious campaka trees and pāṭala trees that had blossomed, and also with kuṭaka and bunyan trees; it was full of aśoka and bakula trees, and was adorned with various other kinds of trees. She saw that holy mountain with trees that had blossomed. Everywhere it appeared beautiful, as it was full of many kinds of minerals. She also saw an excellent lake full of holy water on all sides, shining with fully developed lotuses and other fragrant golden lotuses, with white lotuses and fully developed red lotuses, with blue lotuses, white lotuses and with water-fowls, with other aquatic birds, and was full of various minerals. The lake was white all round, and was full of groups of many kinds of birds. The mountain was graced everywhere by auspicious and sweet cooings of cuckoos and was everywhere agreeable due to the sounds (produced) by madhura trees. It looked lovely by the excellent humming of the bees.

9b-13. The princess saw the mountain like this, charming and excellent, and the lake beautiful all round. Padmāvatī, the daughter of the Vidarbha-king, while playing and engaged in sporting in water, and on the bank of the lake with her friends, saw that auspicious forest full of flowers everywhere, and laughed and sang sportively due to fickleness and powerful feminine nature. O brāhmaṇa, that beautful lady, thus sporting in that lake moved happily.

Viṣṇu said :

14-15. The best demon Gobhila, the servant of Kubera, endowed with all enjoyments, was going in a divine aeroplane along an aerial path (i.e. in the air). At the time he saw the fearless, broad-eyed daughter of the Vidarbha-king.

16. She, the best of all women, the dear wife of Ugrasena, matchless in beauty in the world, shone beautifully in all her limbs.

17-25. (He thought:) 'Might she be Rati, (the spouse) of Cupid, or (Lakṣmī) the dear (wife) of Hari, or goddess Pārvatī or Śacī (the wife of Indra). No other woman like her, the best among women, is seen on the globe. The beautiful woman shines with her beauty and arts as the beautiful full moon shines among the stars. This woman with a charming smile (shines) as a swan in lakes. Oh, how beautiful does her form appear ! Oh, what an amorous gesture ! Who is this charming woman having beautiful round breasts? To whom does she belong?' The demon Gobhila thought like this about (that) beautiful Padmāvatī. O brāhmaṇa, for a moment he thought as to who she was and to whom she belonged. With superior knowledge he knew that she was the daughter of the Vidarbha-king. There was no doubt about it (in his mind). She was the wife of Ugrasena, devoted to her husband. She stood by her own power, and was not easily attainable even by men. Ugrasena, who has sent this young lady to her father's house, is a great fool. He is unfortunate. How would the (king) of a fraudulent mind ever live without her? Or is the king impotent that he would leave (i.e. he has left) her?

26-28a. Seeing her he instantly became enamoured. 'This chaste lady is difficult to be secured even by men. How can I go (near her) and enjoy her? Lust afflicts me very much. If I shall go without enjoying her, then I shall die today only. There is no doubt about it; since lust is very powerful.'

28b-35. Being anxious like this, Gobhila observed mentally (i.e. thought to himself). Taking up an illusory form of king Ugrasena, the demon Gobhila fully became as the great Ugrasena was in point of gait, voice and language; and putting on garments and apparel (like Ugrasena) and being of the same age, and

putting on divine flowers and garments and having besmeared his body with divine sandal, and with his entire body (rendered) handsome as was the lord of Māthura, and thus being full of (i.e. exactly like) Ugrasena, and being equipped with great trickery and (fine) figure and handsomeness he remained on the top of the mountain, after having resorted to the shadow of an aśoka tree. Seated on a slab, the wicked-minded one with the neck of the lute (in his hand), was singing a melodious song, enchanting the universe. The wicked-minded one, enamoured of her beauty, sang a song equipped with the beating time, measure and execution, and adorned with the seven notes. O brāhmaṇa, he, seated on the mountain-top was full of great joy.

36. That beautiful Padmāvatī, who was in the midst of her friends, heard that melodious song, equipped with beating time, measure and the musical time.

37. 'Who is this pious one that is singing a song which gives great pleasure, which is full of fine execution and endowed with all ideas?'

38-42. The princess with curiosity went there with her friends and saw the mean demon Gobhila in the garb of the king, wearing divine flowers and garment and with his body besmeared with divine sandal, with all his limbs decorated with ornaments, seated on a spotless slab, resorting to (i.e. in) the shadow of an aśoka tree. The loyal wife Padmāvatī (thought): 'When did my glorious lord, the king of Māthura, and devoted to religious practices, come, after having left far behind his kingdom?' When she was thinking (like this), the sinful one called her hurriedly: "O my darling, come on." She was amazed and was doubtful as to how her lord had come (there).

43-46. She was ashamed, was afflicted, and then hung down her face (and thought:) 'I am sinful, of a bad conduct. I have turned fearless. There is no doubt that the glorious one will be just angry with me.' When she was thinking like this, that wicked one too hurriedly called her: "O my darling, come on, O dear one, O you of an excellent face (i.e. beautiful one), separated from you I cannot sustain my life; and life is very dear to me; I am longing for your love; I am greatly unable to leave you."

The brāhmaṇa's wife said :

47-48. Thus addressed, she, full of bashfulness, saw the handsome one. Then the demon Gobhila, having embraced that virtuous Padmāvatī, the daughter of Satyaketu, took her to a secluded place, and fully enjoyed her as he desired.

Sukalā said :

49-54. The beautiful one did not find the mark (known to her) on his testicle. Taking up her garment, she became afraid and afflicted. Angrily she spoke (these) words to that mean Gobhila: "Who are you of the form of a demon, who are acting wickedly and who are merciless?" O king, she, with her eyes full (of tears) due to grief, trembling, and oppressed with the burden of affliction was bent on cursing him: "O you wicked one, having come (here) in the guise of my husband, you have destroyed my excellent chastity—my best virtue. Having wailed melodiously, you have destroyed my existence. (Now) see my power; here (i.e. now) only I shall give you a very fearful curse." She, who desired to curse Gobhila, spoke like this.

CHAPTER FIFTY

Padmāvatī Is Grief-stricken

Sukalā said :

1-12. Hearing her words, Gobhila said (these) words: "Tell me the reason for which you desire to curse me. By what blemish am I defiled that you are ready to curse me? O auspicious one, I am a demon by name Gobhila, a warrior of Paulastya (i.e. Rāvaṇa). I act like a demon, I know excellent lore. I know the meaning of the Vedas and branches of knowledge, I am also skilled in arts. All this I know. (Now) listen about my demonish behaviour. I enjoy per force the wealth and the wives of others, and do so in no other way. Listen, we demons properly follow

the demonish ways and do so knowingly. I am telling you the truth (and) the truth (only). Everyday we observe the loopholes of brāhmaṇas. By (putting in) difficulties we destroy their penance; there is no doubt about this. Finding a loophole in the brāhmaṇas we destroy them, O respectable lady. There is no doubt about this. O you of a beautiful face, listen. We destroy a sacrifice in honour of gods, (other) sacrifices and religious rites. There is no doubt about this. There is no doubt that we live by keeping far away excellent brāhmaṇas, the god Lord Nārāyaṇa, and a chaste, illustrious lady of a good mind and devoted to her husband. O respectable lady, demons cannot bear the lustre of a good brāhmaṇa, of glorious Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), and of a lady loyal to her husband. The demons, the best evil spirits flee away due to the fear of a chaste lady, of Viṣṇu and of a good brāhmaṇa. I am roaming over the earth, according to the way of life of a demon. Why do you desire to curse me? What do you think my fault is?"

Padmāvati said :

13-14. You alone have destroyed my dharma (chastity) and good body. O sinner, I am a chaste, pitiable, and virtuous woman, loving my husband. I remained on my own (i.e. followed my own) course (of life). You have defiled me through deceit. Therefore, O wicked one, I shall certainly burn you too.

Gobhila said :

15-16. If you agree I shall explain to you the way of the life of even a brāhmaṇa, who has kept the sacred fire. O princess, listen. Offering oblation (to fire), he should not leave the fire-chamber. He alone is one who has kept the sacred fire and who offers sacrifice everyday.

17-18. O you of an excellent face, I shall also tell you about another (thing)—the way of life of a servant. O respectable lady, he is called a meritorious servant, who is always pure in mind, deeds and speech, who always obeys (his master) and remains behind and in front of him.

19-20. That virtuous, learned and eminent son, who protects his father and especially his mother by his mind (i.e. willingly),

by his body and his actions, has (the merit of) a bath in Bhāgīrathī everyday. He who does (i.e. behaves) in an opposite manner, is undoubtedly a sinner.

21-24a. I shall also narrate to you another excellent vow (in honour) of the husband. O you beautiful lady, listen. That lady alone, who everyday renders service to her husband by good words, mind (i.e. willingly) and actions, and she, who is pleased when her husband is pleased, she, who would not abandon her angry husband, she who does not find fault with him, and she who is contented (though) beaten (by him), and she who always stands in the forefront in all the deeds of her husband, is called a woman devoted to her husband.

24b-28. A father, though fallen, or full of many blemishes, or affected with leprosy or who is angry, is never to be abandoned on any account by his sons. Those sons (who) indeed serve their father or mother, go to the highest heaven. That is the highest place of Viṣṇu. The servants who in this way wait upon their masters go to the heaven of the lord through the grace of the master. A brāhmaṇa (who) does not abandon (keeping) fire, goes to Brahmā's heaven. A brāhmaṇa, who abandons (keeping) fire is called the husband of a śūdra woman. There is no doubt that a servant, by deserting his master, would be plotting against his master.

29. A brāhmaṇa should never give up (keeping) fire, a son should never abandon his father, and a servant should never desert his master. I am telling the truth (and) the truth (only).

30-34. Those who go away leaving (these), go to the ocean in the form of hell. If, O respectable lady, a woman desires her welfare here (i.e. in this world), she should never desert her husband who is fallen, diseased, languid, affected with leprosy, or who is void of (i.e. unable to do) all acts, and whose accumulation of wealth has been lost. A woman who would leave her husband and go and desire to work for someone else here (i.e. in this world), is looked upon as an unchaste woman and is fully excommunicated. People call that woman an unchaste one, who, through fickleness, enjoys pleasures and decorates herself when her husband has gone to (some other) village. Thus I know the dharma (which is) also approved by the Vedas and the sacred treatises.

35-45. There is no doubt that I shall tell you the entire reason about this, viz. as to why at the beginning the creator created demons, goblins and evil spirits. Brāhmaṇas, demons, fiends, goblins, have, O beautiful lady, studied all that is said about dharma. Demons know all (that), but do not practise it. Demons, void of knowledge, do (all acts) without the (proper) rite. Men abandoned by (i.e. not practising) rites go (i.e. act) unjustly. They (i.e. demons) are created for disciplining them (i.e. such men); and not for anything else. We discipline those mean men, who perform (various) acts without proper rites by severely punishing them. You have done a terrible and very cruel act. Why, abandoning your state of a housewife, did you come here? And with your own mouth (i.e. you yourself) are saying that you are a lady loyal to your husband! But that your loyalty to your husband is not seen through your action. Leaving the husband, why have you come here? Decorating yourself, putting on ornaments and (attractive) dress, and (thus) being shameless, you are staying here. O sinful one, tell me why, for what purpose, you have done (this). Being fearless and wanton, you are living in the mountain-forest. Listen, I have subdued you, a sinner, with a great (i.e. severe) punishment. Behaving impiously, you, a wicked woman, have abandoned your husband, and come (here). Where is your loyalty to your husband? Show that before (i.e. to) me. You are indeed an unchaste woman, who have deserted your husband. When a woman occupies a separate bed (i.e. does not occupy the same bed as her husband does), she is looked upon as unchaste.

46. Your husband is at a distance of a hundred yojanas. Where is your loyalty to your husband? You are behaving like an unchaste woman.

47-48a. O you shameless woman, O you cruel one, O you wicked one, facing me (i.e. to me) what (will) you say (now)? Where does your penance exist? Where is your lustre? Where is your power? Show me, today only, your power, valour and prowess.

Padmāvati said :

48b-52a. O you mean demon, listen. My father brought me here from my husband's house through affection. What sin is

there? I, who am devoted to my husband, have come (here) leaving my husband not through lust, or greed, or delusion or hostility (to him). You yourself, taking the guise of my husband, have deceived me. I went forth to you, taking you to be (the king of) Māthura. O you mean demon, (now) when I know you to be (a demon) using tricks, I shall reduce you to ashes just with one hum-sound.

Gobhila said :

52b-56a. Blind human beings do not (i.e. cannot) see. Now listen. How do you, bereft of the eye of dharma know me now? Listen; when a desire for (visiting) your father's house arose in you after you had stopped thinking about your husband, then, your eye of wisdom in your heart had evidently perished. (Now), with your eye of wisdom lost, how do you recognise me on the earth (i.e. here)? To which wife mother, father, brother, kinsmen and relatives belong? (i.e. none of them is related to her). In all (these) places (i.e. in the places of all these), the husband alone (remains); there is no doubt about this.

56b-58a. Saying so, and laughing loudly, the mean demon Gobhila (again spoke:) "O you unchaste woman, listen. Today I have no (cause of) fear from you. What would happen by means of your curse? You are unnecessarily trembling. Resorting to my house, enjoy pleasures as you like."

Padmāvatī said :

58b-59. Go (away), O you of wicked acts. What are you, being shameless, talking? I have (always) lived as a chaste woman, devoted to my husband. O you great sinner, if you talk (shamelessly) like this, I shall burn you.

60-62. Saying so, she sat on the ground in a secluded place. Gobhila said to her who was afflicted with great grief; "O you beautiful one, I have deposited my germ into your womb. From it will spring up a son who will agitate the three worlds." Speaking like this, the demon Gobhila then left.

63. When that demon of wicked acts and sinful behaviour had gone, the princess, full of great grief, wept.

CHAPTER FIFTYONE

Padmāvatī Returns to Her Husband's Place

The wife of the brāhmaṇa said :

1-2. When that wicked-hearted Gobhila of a bad conduct had left, Padmāvatī, being full of great grief, wept. O best brāhmaṇa, hearing her weeping, all her beautiful friends asked the princess.

3-4. (They said:) "Well-being to you, why are you weeping? Tell us your story (i.e. what you did). Tell us where the great king, your (husband) the lord of Māthura, who had invited you by addressing you (as) 'O dear one' is". Weeping again, again she spoke with grief.

5-6. She told (them) everything that had taken place through error. They took her who was weeping and was extremely afflicted to her father's house. Then the damsels told (the account) in the presence of (i.e. to) her mother. Hearing that the queen (i.e. her mother) went to her husband's mansion.

7-10a. She told the account of her daughter to her husband. Hearing it, the king was extremely grieved. Giving her a vehicle, clothes etc. he sent her, along with attendants, to Mathurā. She went to the mansion of her dear (husband). The father and the mother concealed the blemish of their daughter, O best brāhmaṇa; but the righteous-minded Ugrasena, seeing Padmāvatī who had arrived, was glad, and again quickly said these words to her:

10b-11. "O you beautiful lady, I cannot live without you. You are very lustrous; O dear one, you are always dear to me due to your virtues, character, devotion, truth and qualities like devotion to your husband."

12. Ugrasena, the lord of men, the best king, speaking (like this) to dear wife Padmāvatī, enjoyed in her company.

13-16. The fierce foetus, causing fear to all the worlds, grew. Padmāvatī knew the cause of that foetus. Night and day she thought about it growing in her womb: 'What is the use of this one, destroyer of the worlds, being born? Now I have nothing to do with this wicked son.' Everywhere she enquired about a herb that would cause abortion. The lady, secured (i.e. tried to

secure) a great (i.e. effective) herb for abortion. Everyday she adopted many remedies for abortion.

17-21. The foetus, fearful to all the worlds, grew. Then the foetus said to his mother, Padmāvatī: "O mother, why do you trouble yourself by (using) the herbs everyday? (The span of) life increases due to religious merit, and life becomes short due to sin. (Beings) live or die according to the ripening of their deeds. Painful foetuses depart, while others, that are immature (i.e. not properly developed) die as soon as they are born on the earth. Some others are endowed with youth. All children, old men, young men, being under the sway of vital power, die and (i.e. or) live according to the ripening of their deeds. There is no doubt that medicinal herbs, formulae and deities are only a means.

22-24. You do not know me—what kind of (foetus) I am. Formerly you have seen and heard about the very powerful (demon) Kālanemi, who is a very mighty (demon) among the demons, causing fear to the three worlds. In the great war between gods and demons I was formerly killed by Viṣṇu. To finish enmity with (i.e. to take revenge on him, I have come to your womb. O mother, do not act rashly and do not exert yourself everyday."

25-31a. O best brāhmaṇa, speaking thus to his mother, he ceased (speaking). His mother then gave up her exertion, (but) became very much afflicted. When ten years had passed, he grew. Then he became very lustrous, and that Kaṁsa became very powerful, who harrassed the people, the residents of the three worlds; and who, killed by Vāsudeva, went to (i.e. obtained) salvation. There is no doubt about it. Thus O dear one, I have heard like this. Whatever will happen, will happen. I have told you what has been determined in all the Purāṇas. The daughter, who lives in her father's house, perishes. O dear one, a daughter should not have longing for staying in her father's house. Abandoning this wicked one, a great sinner, be composed. Great sin and terrible grief would be obtained (by us if we keep her here). O dear one, enjoy with me, that leads to felicity in the world.

The female hog said :

31b-41a. That best brāhmaṇa, hearing these words contain-

ing good advice, decided to forsake (his daughter). He then called me. He gave me everything like garments and decorations (and said to me). "O good one, listen. Due to your bad conduct, that best, intelligent brāhmaṇa went (away). O you wicked one, O you of a bad couduct in the family, go there where your husband is. There is no doubt about this (i.e. this cannot be otherwise); (or go to) the place which you like. Do as you are advised." O you glorious one, after my father had said like this, I, a shameless woman, abandoned by my father, mother and (other) members of the family, quickly went away, O you beautiful lady. O you good lady, I did (i.e. could) not secure a comfortable abode. People reproached me saying, '(Oh) this unchaste lady has arrived.' Void of the pride of my family, and wandering (here and there), I went from (my father's) country, to a holy Śiva-temple in Saurāṣṭra in the Gurjara-country. It was a city full of prosperity and known as Vanasthala. Listen, O queen, at that time I was very much oppressed by hunger. Taking a potsherd in my hand I started begging. Being extremely afflicted I entered the gates of householders. People saw my form and reproached it. They did not give me alms, (saying) 'this wicked one has come (here)'. I thus obtained proper food with difficulty, and was entirely oppressed with poverty.

41b-43. While wandering, I saw an excellent house, surrounded by a high rampart, with a chamber for (the recitation) of the Vedas, which was crowded with many brāhmaṇas; it was full of wealth and grains, and was adorned with male and female servants. I entered that beautiful house, affluent with glory.

44. That house which was auspicious all round was the house of that Śivaśarman only. Sudevā, afflicted with grief, said: "(Please) give (me) alms."

45-47. The best brāhmaṇa, Śivaśarman, heard the words: "Give (me) alms". That righteous-minded, very intelligent Śivaśarman, smiled and said to his beautiful wife Maṅgalā by name, who was of the nature of Lakṣmī: "O dear one, this enfeebled one has come to (our) door for alms. O auspicious and dear one, being full of great pity, call her and give her food. She has come to me after having recognised me."

48-50. Maṅgalā said to her dear husband: "I shall give her food dear to (i.e. liked by) her." Speaking like this to her

husband Maṅgalā, endowed with auspiciousness, again fed me, the weak one, with sweet food. That righteous-minded, great sage Śivaśarman said to me: "Who are you that have come here? To whom do you belong? On what mission do you roam everywhere over the earth. Tell me."

51-53. Having thus heard the words of my glorious husband, I, the sinner, recognised him by his voice. When I saw my husband, I hung down my face through shame. Maṅgalā, beautiful in all limbs, said to (our) husband: "Tell me who she is, (since) on seeing you she is ashamed. Please favour me and tell me who she might be."

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

Sudevā Goes to Heaven

Śivaśarman said :

1. O Maṅgalā, if you are now asking, then listen to (my) words. O you of an excellent face (i.e. O you beautiful one), know that for which you have asked (me).

2-5. O you of charming eyes, this miserable one who has now come in the form of a beggar, is the daughter of the brāhmaṇa Vasudatta. O good one, this one is Sudevā, my wife, always dear to me. Leaving her (father's) country for some reason, she has come (here). O you beautiful one, she is scorched by grief due to me and separation from me. Recognising me, she has come to you in the form of a beggar. Realising this, O good one, you, desiring what is very dear to me, should show her good hospitality. There is no doubt about it (i.e. you should certainly show her good hospitality).

(*The female hog said* :)

6-14. Maṅgalā, who looked upon her husband as a deity, and who herself was extremely auspicious, was full of great joy on just hearing the words of her husband. O you beautiful one, she made (arrangements for) my bath, clothes and food. O you

good one, I, devoted to my husband, was adorned by her, dear to her husband, with golden ornaments decked with jewels. O queen, I was graced by her with respect, bath and food. I was (also) respected by my husband. In my heart there was endless, very poignant grief, fully destroying my life. I observed her respect for me; in the same way (I noted) my affliction. I had terrible anxiety due to which my life departed (i.e. was about to depart). I, a sinner, committing bad acts never gave a good answer to this best brāhmaṇa. I did not wash his feet, nor did I shampoo his body, nor did I give the glorious one (company) in solitude. How shall I, of a wicked resolution, talk to him? Then at night I fell there into the ocean of grief. When I was thinking like this, my heart burst; then O beautiful lady, my life, leaving my body, departed.

15-27a. Then there came brave, fierce messengers of Yama who held maces, discs and swords. O you illustrious one, I was, bound by them with chains binding strongly. I, who was weeping and who was very much afflicted, was taken by them to Yama's city. Being beaten with mallets I was harassed along the difficult path. Being reproached by them I was ushered into the presence of Yama. The noble and angry Yama looked at me. I was thrown into a heap of ashes; I was thrown into a heap of hells. An iron figure of man was made; it was heated in fire, and it was hurled on my breast for having deceived my husband. I was very much tormented with various troubles; I was burnt with the fire in hell; I was thrown into an oval vessel and on mud and sand. I was cut with blades of swords and dragged by a machine used for raising water. The noble one hurled me on Kūṭaśālmali trees. I fell into pus, blood and feces, full of insects. O princess, the same magnanimous one thus threw me into all poignant hells full of trouble. I was torn up with saw, and was very much struck with darts. O princess, I was also hurled into other hells; I was thrown into hollows like wombs, and into a painful narrow passage. That lord of Dharma (i.e. Yama) threw me into hells. Reaching (i.e. being born in) the species of goats, I experienced very terrible pain. I went to (i.e. was born in) the species of jackals and again that of a bitch; (then) I was born as a hen, a cat and a rat.

27b-32a. Thus that Yama threw me into different species,

and I was troubled in all births. O princes, he himself made (i.e. created) me a female hog on the earth. O you glorious one, there are many kinds of holy places in your hand. O you of an excellent complexion, you yourself sprinkled that (holy) water on me. O queen, O beautiful lady, by your favour, my sin has vanished, O you of an excellent face, by the lustrous religious merit of you only. Knowledge is produced in me. Now emancipate me, who have fallen into the hell-like peril. When (i.e. if) O queen, you do not emancipate me, I shall again go (back) to a terrible hell. O you illustrious one, protect me who am experiencing grief. Due to sinful thoughts I suffered. I am wretched, I am without a shelter.

Sudevā said :

32b-33a. O auspicious one, now tell me what good deed I have done that would give rise to religious merit, by which I would emancipate you.

The female hog said :

33b-39a. This illustrious Ikṣvāku-king, the son of Manu, the very wise one, is Viṣṇu, and you are Lakṣmī, not otherwise (i.e. and none else). O you auspicious one, you are devoted to your husband; you are glorious; you are a loyal wife; you are always chaste; you are full of all holy places; you are dear; O queen, you are full of everything and are always full of all gods. You alone are a great loyal wife in the world; you who have day and night rendered service to your husband, are dear to the king. O beautiful one, if you (desire to) do what I like, give me your merit earned by the service to your husband, even for a day. You are my mother, you are my father, you are my eternal preceptor. I am sinful, of wicked acts, given to falsehood and without knowledge. O glorious one, emancipate me. I am afraid of being beaten by Yama.

Sukalā said :

39b-40a. Having heard like this, she saw the king and said to him: "O great king, what do (i.e. should) I do? What does this beast say?"

Ikṣvāku (king) said :

40b-41a. O auspicious one, with your merit emancipate this one who is unhappy, helpless and gone to (i.e. born in) a sinful species. It will be very righteous.

41b-47. That very charming and auspicious lady Sudevā, when addressed like this, said "O you beautiful lady, I have given you (my) merit for a year." When the queen uttered these words, just at that moment the hog became endowed with beauty and youth, adorned with a divine garland, got a divine body covered with lustrous flames, was rich with the beauty of all ornaments, and adorned with many jewels. She had a divine form, besmeared with divine sandal. The good one got into a divine aeroplane, and went into the higher region. She saluting the queen with her neck bowed down (in respect for the queen) then said: "O you magnanimous one, well-being to you; O beautiful lady, due to your favour, I, being free from sin, am going to the holiest and auspicious heaven." O best one, listen, having thus saluted her, Sudevā went to heaven. I have (thus) told you all this as told by Sukalā.

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

Sukalā's Sickening Description of the Body

Sukalā said :

1-2a. Formerly, at that time I thus heard (about) the Dharma from the Purāṇas. How shall I, of a sinful resolve, enjoy pleasures without my husband? I cannot sustain my life with (i.e. in) my body without that husband.

Viṣṇu said :

2b-9. She thus narrated the excellent, great Dharma of the chastity of a wife; and those friends, excellent women, having heard the very meritorious Dharma for women, giving a great position (i.e. salvation) to women, praised that glorious Sukalā

devoted to virtue. O king, all brāhmaṇas, gods and all virtuous women call her to mind due to her prowess caused by love for her husband. Indra, the lord of gods, having given a great (i.e. serious) thought to the firmness of Sukalā, and he, the lord of gods, having well pondered over her great devotion (thought): 'I shall certainly shake her fortitude and her love for her husband.' The lord of gods hurriedly recalled to mind god Cupid. He, the fish-bannered (god), holding his flowery bow came there. The very powerful one was seen to be accompanied by his beloved Rati. Joining the palms of his hands, he said to the thousand-eyed (Indra): "O you lord, O you eminent one, O you who cut off the pride (of your enemies), why have you remembered me now? With all your heart give me an order today."

Indra said :

10-11a. This illustrious Sukalā is greatly devoted to her husband. O god of love, listen, give me an excellent help. Move away (swerve) this glorious Sukalā, auspicious due to religious merit, (from her devotion).

11b-20. Having heard those words of Indra, he said to him: "Let it be so, O thousand-eyed god; there is no doubt that I shall gladly help you." Cupid, of great lustre, and difficult to be conquered (even) by sages, having said so (spoke again:) "O god, I am capable of conquering gods, ascetics and best sages; then what to say of this woman, who has no strength in her body (i.e. who is weak)? O god, I always live in the limbs of women. (I live) in the foreheads, eyes, on the tips of their breasts, in their navels, waists, backs, buttocks, vaginal area, lips, teeth, middle parts (of their bodies); there is no doubt about this. I live everywhere; in their limbs and minor limbs. O god, a woman is my abode. I always live there. Living there, I slay all men; there is no doubt about this. A woman, weak by nature (and) tormented by my arrows, on seeing a handsome and virtuous (person like her) father, mother, or other kinsman or relative, and being struck with my arrows, is disturbed; there is no doubt about it. She does not even think of the consequence. O lord of gods, the vulva, and also the tips of the breasts of women, throb. They do not have patience. O lord of gods, I shall undoubtedly ruin Sukalā."

Indra said :

21-23. O mind-born (god), I shall become (i.e. turn myself into) a handsome, virtuous, wealthy man; and through curiosity I shall disturb this woman. O you dear to Rati, (I shall disturb her only through curiosity; and) not through longing for her, nor for frightening her, nor through cupidity, nor through infatuation, nor again through anger. (I am telling) the truth (and) the truth (only). How can I see her true devotion to her husband? Going from here I shall turn her (away from her vow). The cause for that would be the infatuation (caused) by you.

24-29. Having thus ordered the god of love, the king of gods brought about a change in himself (i.e. took up a different form), became handsome and virtuous, made his body graceful by ornaments, was endowed with all possessions and all pleasures and amusements, and possessed all generosity. He would show (i.e. he showed) his sportive movements, handsomeness, virtues and sincerity at the place where, O king, that respectable woman, the dear (wife) of Kṛkala, stayed. But she did not at all look at the man possessing the wealth of handsomeness. O king, Indra would (follow her to) see her wherever she went. The thousand-eyed god looked at her only with a longing mind and with all expressions of lustful acts. Wherever the woman went—into a crossway, along a path or to a holy place, the thousand-eyed (god) saw her.

30-32. The female messenger sent by Indra went to Sukalā; and having smiled she said to the glorious Sukalā: "O (great are) your truthfulness, courage, charm and forbearance. In the world there is no other beautiful woman resembling a form like that of this one. O auspicious one, who are you? Whose wife are you? He, whose virtuous wife you are, is blessed and meritorious on the earth."

33-37. Hearing her words the high-minded lady said (to her:) "(Kṛkala) the religious-minded one, lover of truth, was born in the vaiśya caste. I am telling you the truth: I am the dear wife of that intelligent and veracious Kṛkala. That my very intelligent, righteous-minded husband has gone on a pilgrimage. O glorious one, listen; three years have passed since he, my lord, left (for the pilgrimage). Since then I have been afflicted without

(i.e. due to separation from) the magnanimous one. Thus I have told you all this my account. Tell me who, that ask me ('who I am'), you are."

38-51a. Hearing the words of Sukalā, the messenger spoke again : "O good one, you are asking me like this. I shall tell you everything. O you of an excellent complexion, I have come to you for (i.e. on) some mission. Listen (as) I shall tell you; and having heard, know it accurately. O you of a beautiful face, your merciless husband has gone after abandoning you. What will you do with him, the sinful one, who does harm to his beloved, endowed with a good conduct? What, O you young lady, have you to do with him, who has gone (away) and is alive or dead? What will you do with him? You are thus grieving in vain. Why do you destroy your divine body, lustrous like gold? O you auspicious one, O you glorious one, a man does not get any pleasure except children's sports, when childhood is attained by him. In old age, unhappiness comes (to him), and old age completely destroys his body. O you beautiful lady, he gladly enjoys all pleasures in youth. As long as youth lasts, men enjoy all pleasures and enjoyments. A man enjoys as he likes. He enjoys pleasures as long as youth lasts. What will you do, O good lady, when youth has gone? O respectable lady, no occupation succeeds when old age comes (to him). An old man constantly thinks, (but) does not (i.e. cannot) easily do any job. O young lady, bridge is constructed after water has gone (i.e. flowed). In the same way, O auspicious lady, the body would be (useless) when youth has passed. Therefore, enjoy happily; and drink sweet wine. O you of charming eyes, these arrows of Cupid are burning your body. This handsome and virtuous man has come. O you of an excellent complexion, this best man, who knows everything, who is virtuous and wealthy, is ever full of love for you."

Sukalā said :

51b-60. The soul does not have childhood; in life there is no youth. He (i.e. the soul) does not have old age. He (has) accomplished (everything); he grants good divine attainments. He is immortal, unaging, pervading (everything), (has) well accomplished (everything), and is best among the omniscient

ones. Himself being desireless,[1] he fulfils desires, and lives in the world in the form of the soul. The formation of the body is seen to be like that of a house. As the body is (weak) due to old age, so is a house with a thread. One should effect it with the heaps of many sticks and collections of pieces of wood, with clay and water also. Besmeared with variegated (objects) by plasterers, a (piece of wood) becomes agreeable. A house first bound by a thread gets a form; and they themselves everyday maintain it by smearing it. The house constantly rocked by wind gets dirty. This is said to be the middle period of the house. It would lose its form, and the master of the house would smear it. The lord of the house, by his own desire, would make the house beautiful. O messenger, the youth of the house is said (to be like this). After a long time due to the heaps of sticks it becomes old. They lose their positions, and move to the tips of the roots. It does not (i.e. is not able to) stand the burden of the smearing, and stands (only) with a prop.

61-70a. O messenger, listen, this is said to be the old age of the house. The lord of the house, seeing the house falling, would leave it. To enter another house he goes away quickly. Like that are the childhood, youth and old age of men. In childhood, he, being of the form of a child, would act senselessly. He would even decorate his body with garments, ornaments and jewels, and also with smearings with sandal (-pastes), and others produced from tāmbūla etc. The body becomes young, and he becomes very handsome. He would nourish his exterior and interior with all juices. Being nourished like that he becomes strong. Due to the juices, fresh and excellent, increase in flesh takes place. O king, the limbs also become extended and corpulent. The minor limbs also take their own form due to the intake of juices also. The teeth, lips, breasts, arms, waist, back, both the hands and the soles of the feet (also) similarly develop. Due to these two (i.e. juices and flesh) the limbs develop. They become beautiful due to the juices and flesh. O messenger, due to these forms, a mortal becomes one dependent on juices. A mortal is called handsome in the world. Due to what would he be liked?

1. The analogy occurring in verses 53, 54, 55, 57 etc. is not sufficiently clear; also the description in vv. 94, 95, 101b etc. is not clear (Tr.).

70b-78. O messenger, this body is the store of feces and urine. The impure, shameless body always exudes (sweat). O you auspicious one, what is (the use of) describing its beauty? It is like a bubble on water. Till he is fifty years old, he remains strong. Then after that, day by day, he loses (his strength). His teeth become loose, and his mouth has a flow of saliva. He would not (i.e. is unable to) see with his eyes, and does not (i.e. cannot) hear with his ears. O messenger, he is not able to make any movement with his hands and feet. Being afflicted with old age, the body becomes unfit. The juice, dried up with the fire of old age, withers. O messenger, he becomes unfit. Who desires handsomeness? As an old house perishes—there is no doubt about it, in the same way the body becomes weak in old age. Everyday you are describing that beauty has come to me (i.e. I am beautiful). Due to what am I endowed with beauty? Who desires my beauty? Due to what (i.e. in what way) is the man for whom, O messenger, you have come to me—as one goes to an old house—powerful? On account of what are you praising (me)?

79-97. O messenger, now tell me, what did you see in my body? There is nothing here (i.e. in my body) which is short or extra as compared to his body. There is no doubt that as he is, so you are, so also I am. Who would not have beauty? On the earth there is no one (who is really) handsome. All heights end in a fall; O auspicious one, trees and mountains are devastated by time. Beings are like them (only), not otherwise. O messenger, the divine, pure soul, formless (and yet) having a form, is present everywhere, in all immobile and mobile objects. The pure one lives (everywhere) as one (and the same) water remains in (many) pots. On the destruction of the pots, it becomes one. You do not know (this). This soul also becomes just one on the destruction of bodies. I have always seen this form (only) of those who live in the world. Speak like this, after knowing him for whom you have come here. (Tell him:) you should show me something new about the body that is afflicted by a disease, and covered with cough, if you desire to enjoy me here. Blood drops from the body, and he is removed from his position. There is unsteadiness in all the joints of the body and remaining within he singly perishes and would give up his own form. Quickly the condition of feces takes place (i.e. food quickly turns into feces)

and (the body) would be (i.e. is full of) insects. He would then give up his own form painful like that. Listen, it later becomes full of bad odour due to insects. Then lice or worms are produced there; there is no doubt about this. The worm causes boils and terrible itch. The louse would produce disease, and would disturb the entire body. The itch scratched with the nail-tips is abated. Similarly hear about copulation (enjoyed) by them. There is no doubt that a mortal enjoys drinks and feasts on abundant supply of food. It is taken to the place of digestion by the breath (called) Prāṇa. O messenger, all that food taken to the place of digestion is covered there, and the wind (called Apāna) would make the fece fall (out of the body). The liquid which has become vigorous there, becomes red (blood). Being free from dirt and of a pure vigour it goes to Brahmā's place. Being dragged by the wind (called) Samāna, and taken by that very wind, he does not obtain a place. The semen remains unsteady. In the skulls of beings five (kinds of) insects live. Two of them live at the root of the ears, and (two) at the place of the eyes. Having the size of the small finger, they have red tails, O messenger. Having the (white) colour of butter, they have black tails. There is no doubt about this.

98-109. O good one, listen to their names being narrated by me: The two, named Piṅgalī and Śṛṅkhalī, remain at the root of the ears. The two Capala and Pippala remain on the tip of the nose. The two others, Śṛṅgalī and Jaṅgalī remain inside the eyes. There is no doubt that there are one hundred and fifty (varieties) of insects like that. All they remain at the border of the forehead and have the size of a mustard. All (these) carrying diseases deform (the body); there is no doubt about it. O messenger, listen, a pair of hair remains in his mouth. Know that the destruction of beings takes place just at that moment. There is no doubt about it. The vigour falls in the form of a fluid. There is no doubt about it. He drinks the vigour with his mouth, and by that becomes inebriated. It remains unsteady in the middle part of the palate. There remain (the two vessels of the body called) Iḍā and Piṅgalā and the artery called Suṣumnā. Due to the great power of it only, there is indeed the itch for sex in the cage formed by the net of arteries, in the case of all beings. O messenger, the organs of generation of the male and also of the female

throb. Then the male and the female, being inflamed with passion, unite. The body (of the male) is rubbed with the body (of the female). Due to coitus a momentary pleasure is produced. Then again a similar itch is (produced). Such a condition is indeed observed everywhere, O messenger. Go to your own place. There is nothing new about it. I have nothing new, nor do I do anything new. This is certain.

CHAPTER FIFTYFOUR

Sukalā Gets Prepared For the Showdown

Viṣṇu said :

1-4. When the female messenger was thus addressed by that Sukalā she went (to Indra). Indra, having understood those significant and truthful words of her, well spoken in a brief manner, and having perceived her boldness, courage and knowledge (thought:) 'Who, (even) being a woman, would speak on the earth, words that are of the form of (i.e. endowed with) propriety and that are well-ordered and washed with the water of logic? This magnanimous one is pure and of a truthful nature. There is no doubt that she is capable of bearing the yoke (i.e. responsibility) of all the three worlds?'

5. Due to this Jiṣṇu (i.e. Indra) thought and said to Cupid: "With you I shall go to see that beloved (wife) of Kṛkala."

6-7. Cupid, proud of his power, replied to the thousand-eyed (Indra): "O lord of the gods, let us go (to the place) where the chaste lady is (staying). Having gone there, I shall destroy her self-respect, power, strength, courage, truthfulness and loyalty to her husband. Of what account is she (to me), O lord of gods?"

8-9. Having heard (these) words of Cupid, the thousand-eyed (Indra said:) "O Cupid, listen. Excessive talking is of no use. She is quite strong with true power. Due to religious rites she is quite firm. This Sukalā is inconquerable. Your valour is (of) no (use) there (i.e. against her)."

10-13. Hearing this, and getting angry, Cupid said to Indra:

"I have destroyed the power of sages and deities. Of what measure (i.e. how much) is her power (about which) you are telling me? You just see (i.e. in your very presence), I shall destroy the woman. As butter, on seeing (i.e. in the presence of) the lustre of fire, would melt, similarly I shall melt her with my form and lustre. Now certainly great mission has come up for me, who am going there. Why do you condemn my lustre (capable of) destroying the three worlds?"

Viṣṇu said :

14-17. Having heard the words of Cupid (Indra said:) "O Cupid, I know, (even) if you raise (i.e. augment) your courage, you cannot subdue her of a holy body, meritorious due to her virtue, and behaving piously. Going from here (with you) I shall observe your strong power." With the archer (i.e. Cupid) and with the female messenger Rati, he again went to that chaste lady, who of a great merit was (all) alone and attached to her husband's feet, as a meditative saint would place his heart (in meditation) and make it free from uncertainty. The glorious fish-bannered god (i.e. Cupid) made (i.e. took up) a form, extremely wonderful, endowed with an unlimited lustre, alluring the chaste lady, adorned with blue (garments) and full of objects of enjoyment. Also Indra (took up a similar form).

18-24. Seeing that great man, of many amorous sports and wandering like this, full of desires, the wife of the glorious Vaiśya did not highly think of him (who was) endowed with a handsome form and (was an) appreciator of merits. The nature of that chaste lady had become endowed with truth, as water going to a lotus-petal, gets the name 'pearl'. 'The female messenger, whom he had formerly sent, told (me) about this appreciator of merits. This one would show in various ways his sportive form and his nature. How far this very intelligent and mischievous lover, knowing my nature would live? (Now) my body is a vacuum, and is instantly free of movements and is as good as dead. The subjects of the village of the body, have, after performing the acts called good acts, fled away. Cupid has endowed him with charm, greater than, equal to or superior to my charm. I shall talk in a wonderful way to him, who longs for me, in such a

way that he, dancing with his own knowledge, powerful and endowed with joy, dies.'

25. Thinking like this, that great chaste lady, binding her firmly with the string of truth entered her own house to know his mind definitely.

CHAPTER FIFTYFIVE

Indra Tries to Dissuade Kāma

Viṣṇu said :

1-3. Knowing her mind, the lord of gods said to Cupid standing before him: "O Cupid, she, who is well-equipped with the armour of meditation with truth as its soul, cannot be conquered by you. With a desire to conquer, and taking in her hand the bow called piety and an excellent arrow named knowledge, she has stood on the battlefield, like a hero proud of his valour, to fight (with you). (This is her) valour only. Now do (i.e. show) your valour. She is today capable of conquering you in the battle. What is going to happen should be thought just now.

4-5. Here only the glorious Śiva had formerly burnt you, who had opposed him. O Cupid, as a result of that evil (act of yours), you had become bodiless. (This is) just the truth. O Cupid, you had formerly obtained a horrible fruit in accordance with the deed you had performed. Certainly you will obtain a very contemptible birth (i.e. will be born in a very contemptible species). Here only you will be told (like this) along with this chaste lady.

6. Those wise men who, in the three worlds, entertain enmity with the magnanimous, have as its fruit, sin accompanied by misery and destroying their form.

7-14. O Cupid, having proclaimed ourselves to this chaste lady, and having urged her (to continue her pious acts), we shall go. Formerly due to my contact with a chaste lady I obtained a sinful, unbearable fruit. You know this account (that) I was cursed by that Gautama also. I became one having the scrotum

of a ram for ever, and you went away, leaving me there. The power of the lustre of chaste women is matchless. (Even) the creator or the sun (also) is not able to bear it. The curse formerly pronounced by the sage (-husband) of Anasūyā would (continue to) preserve this contemptible form (of you). (The chaste lady) having stopped the forcible, rising sun, very bright with lustre, stopped the curse of Kauṇḍinya pronounced by Nāṇḍavya. Atri's wife was truthful and chaste. She made the three gods her sons. O Cupid, have you not formerly heard that chaste women are always purified by sacred rites. Sāvitrī was the daughter of Dyumatsena. She brought back here only the life of Satyavān, Aśvapati's good son, from Yama. Chastity of women is thus well known. Who would touch the flame of fire? Or, who, except a fool, would, tying stones round his neck, (try to) cross the ocean with his hands? Or who would (try to) subdue a chaste woman who is free from attachment?" When Indra thus spoke words of prudence for instructing Cupid well, he, Cupid, having heard (these) words said to the lord of gods.

Cupid said :

15-18. By your order I have come (here). Having given up patience, goodheartedness and manliness, you are telling me about her (something), which lacks energy and is full of great fear. When I shall entertain bad thoughts, O lord of gods, my fame in the world will perish. Subdued by her people will describe me, who bring about marriages to be without self-respect. The hosts of gods, demons, sages, and saints with austerity will instantly laugh at me (saying:) 'This fearful Cupid is subdued by a woman.' Therefore, O lord of gods, I shall go with you and shall destroy her power, self-respect, lustre and fortitude. O Indra, why are you (then) afraid here (i.e. in this matter)?

19-23. Having thus addressed the lord of gods, and having held his bow and flowery arrow, he said to Rati, standing before him: "Acting deceitfully you should go the vaiśya's wife Sukalā, who is meritorious, who remains in (i.e. practices) truth, who knows piety and appreciates virtues. O darling, going from here do the work, helpful (to my mission), as told (by me). (Please) obey (me)." Having thus spoken to Rati, he again called Rati, standing near. (He said:) "Do this excellent job for me; subdue

her through great affection. (Act in such a way) that this beautiful woman would fall in love with Indra on seeing him. O friend, listen, by all means win her over with all miraculous powers; O friend, go quickly and effect an illusory grove, having the form of (i.e. resembling) Nandana-garden, full of flowers, abounding in fruits, and resounding with the cooings of the cuckoos and the hummings of the bees."

24-25. Having called the brave Elixir of Life, the very gratifying Flower-juice, endowed with sweet virtues, and sent him according to his wish along with Wind etc. engaged in their own duties and ordering the great army, infatuating three worlds, Cupid went with the lord of gods, to that great chaste lady, to allure (her).

CHAPTER FIFTYSIX

Satya & Dharma Come to Sukalā's Help

Viṣṇu said :

1-11a. Cupid, with the lord of gods, started to go to Sukalā to bring about a genuine destruction of her. At that time Satya (i.e. Truth) said to Dharma: "See, O very intelligent Dharma Cupid's misdeed. I create (i.e. have created) a great place, an excellent house, of the nature of an abode, causing (i.e. giving) happiness, and called Satya (truth), Supriya (very dear) and Sudeva (with good deities), for the sake of you, the righteous and magnanimous one, and for my sake. This wicked Cupid, of a blundering mind, and of an inimical nature, would go to it and certainly destroy that excellent house of us. There is no doubt that a Brāhmaṇa with penance as his wealth as the husband, a very poius chaste woman, and a very truthful king, are, O Dharma, my abodes. There is no doubt about it. You would reside there where I am nourished with prosperity. Puṇya (i.e. Merit) comes there and sports with Śraddhā (i.e. Faith). Kṣamā (i.e. Forbearance) accompanied by Śānti (i.e. Tranquility) comes to my abode. Real Dama (i.e. Restraint), and Dayā (i.e.

Pity) and Sauhārda (i.e. Good-heartedness), Nirlobha (i.e. Absence of greed), along with Intelligence are there where I live. Śuci Svabhāva (i.e. Pure Nature) (stays) there only. These are my kinsmen. Non-stealing, Harmlessness, Endurance and Prosperity have come to my house. O king Dharma, listen to my blessedness. Service of preceptors and elderly persons, Viṣṇu accompanied by Lakṣmī, gods led by Agni, come to my house. Jñāna (i.e. Knowledge) accompanied by Brilliance, that would illumine the path to salvation (has come to my house).

11b-14. I always live with these in chaste women, religious persons, and in all good people that are of the form of my house. Along with you I just live with the family about which I told you. They, who are virtuous and of a good nature, have been made my abode by the Creator. O magnanimous one, I move comfortably and at will. The lord, the master of the three worlds, the three-eyed one, having the bull (viz. Nandi) as his vehicle, lives, with Śivā (i.e. Pārvatī), in his own form in my house.

15-20. This, then, is the essence of the worldly existence, of the form of a house, of a lordly nature—an abode called Śaṅkara. That is destroyed by Cupid. This Cupid formerly subdued, after having taken resort to (i.e. the help of) Menakā, the magnanimous Viśvāmitra, practising excellent penance. That wicked Cupid led the chaste, loyal Ahalyā, the dear, auspicious wife of Gautama away from great truth. All sages, knowing the genuine Dharma, many chaste women—all these my abodes were burnt by the fire of Cupid. He is irresistible, unbearable, (all-) pervasive, and very harsh to great truths. He is looking for me (saying:) 'Where does Truth stay?' Knowing me (i.e. finding out my abode) he, the archer, with arrows in his hands, comes; and the sinful one would destroy my house with fires.

21-25. All those having bits of sins, who are cruel, who have resorted to heretics, who are malevolent in mind, will enter the house of Satya. Subdued by the generals of the army who are untruthful and by that Chadman (i.e. Dishonesty), the sinner would ruin (and) strike (my) house with sinful weapons. The wicked, very powerful Cupid will strike me like this. Burnt by his lustre I shall be a non-entity. I desire (to have) a new house called the woman looking upon her husband as her king. This one, good and auspicious, is the dear (wife) of the meritorious

Kṛkala. This wicked (Cupid) is intent on burning that house called Sukalā.

26-30a. How is it that the mighty thousand-eyed (Indra) does not know (i.e. remember) his former account (i.e. what happened to him) on account of Cupid? He became one having the scrotum of a ram due to his attachment to Ahalyā. The lord of gods (i.e. Indra), who had remained there (i.e. in Gautama's hermitage), had perished on seeing the manliness of the sage and due to the outrage of a chaste woman, as a result of Cupid's fault. He suffered a terrible curse, and was full of great grief. This thousand-eyed (Indra), along with Cupid, is eager to strike this Sukalā, Kṛkala's dear wife practising meritorious acts. O Dharmarāja, O very intelligent one, act in such a way that this Cupid would not come (to her) with Indra. You are the best among the intelligent ones."

Dharmarāja said :

30b-33a. I shall lessen the lustre of Cupid and bring about his death. I have found out one remedy. You may (please) examine it now only. This very intelligent Prajñā moving in the form of a bird, may tell (i.e. announce), from the sky, the auspicious arrival of (Sukalā's) husband. She, due to the prowess of the omen, and with her mind steady, would certainly not be ruined by the wicked.

33b-35a. He (then) sent Prajña. She went to the house of Sukalā. Making a great sound she shone like one who had been seen (i.e. favoured) by gods. Then she was worshipped and honoured with incense, lights etc. Sukalā asked the brāhmaṇa: "What would she (i.e. does she) say to me?"

The brāhmaṇa said :

35b-36. The steady one announces the arrival of your husband, O blessed one. He will arrive within seven days. This will not be otherwise.

37. Hearing these very auspicious words, she at once became very glad. (She thought that) her virtuous, dear husband, knowing righteousness, had arrived.

CHAPTER FIFTYSEVEN

The Trap Is Laid For Sukalā

Viṣṇu said :

1-3. Rati, taking up the form of a chaste lady, went to the house of the charming loyal wife. She (i.e. Sukalā) the blessed one, endowed with a truthful nature, respectfully spoke to her (i.e. Rati). Rati, the chaste lady, well-honoured with very auspicious words, smiled and spoke to Sukalā, words full of deceit, alluring all and containing a truthful topic: "(Please) listen, my husband, my lord, who is very strong, who appreciates virtues, who is wise and learned, who is endowed with greatness, who has a holy name, left me who am more (i.e. very) sinful and has gone away."

4-5. Sukalā, due to her feminine nature, after having heard all that she (i.e. Rati) said through agreeable words, took her to be of a very pure nature, and said to her: "O beautiful lady, why did your lord abandon your beautiful form and go away? Today tell me the truth about your good husband. You, endowed with meditation, who have come to my house, and being of the nature of my friend, are doing everything for me."

6-10. Rati said: "Listen to the real account of my lord. O dear one, I was always engaged (in giving him) what he desired, and thus appeased him. To carry out the auspicious words of my good lord, I did everything attentively. I am of an extremely good disposition, virtuous and worthy of him through my rendering service to him who is supreme for me in this world. This is the fruit of my former (deeds) which appears now only, and due to which my husband has thus gone away after abandoning me, who am luckless. O friend, I do not (i.e. cannot) sustain my life and my body. How do shameless women live well without their husbands? In the scriptures, a husband is described to be the beauty, decoration, good fortune, happiness and wealth, and not otherwise (i.e. and none else)."

11-14. She (i.e. Sukalā) having heard all that Rati said, and looking upon it as the truth, believed her talk. That magnanimous Sukalā, devoted to her husband, and confiding (in Rati), again spoke to her words describing her acts. She

told in brief all her former account. "Since the husband, intent upon gaining religious merit, has gone on a pilgrimage, our grief is very true, and so is our suffering, O you virtuous lady." Having (thus) cheered up the chaste lady, Rati advised her.

Sūta said :

15-22. Once that Rati said to Sukalā : "O friend, see the pleasing wood adorned by divine trees. There is a very auspicious sacred place, destroying sins. It looks charming due to the spreading out of many creepers, and good flowers. O you of an excellent face, we too should go (there)." Hearing that Sukalā entered, with Rati, that divine forest, resembling Indra's garden. It was having flowers of all seasons, and was resounding with calls of hundreds of cuckoos; it was full of the music of bees' sweet hummings; it was full of the auspicious sounds of propitious birds; it shone with trees like the sandal and with fragrances. It was full of all pleasures and with the spring-creeper and the spring season. It was put up to allure Sukalā. With her she (i.e. Rati) entered the wood, pleasing to all. She saw the auspicious (grove) giving pleasure (but) did not know the fraudulent intention (of Rati), when, O lord of men, she saw the divine wood with her (i.e. Rati).

23-26a. Shining with his divine form, Indra also went to that place. Cupid also came there along with that messenger. (Indra) being the lord of all enjoyments, and full of amorous sports, called Cupid and said to him: "This Sukalā has come. O glorious one, strike her standing before you and brought by Rati through trickery near you. If you have valour show it today. Do it certainly."

Cupid said :

26b-27a. O you thousand-eyed (Indra), show your charming form, endowed with amorous sport, so that I shall strike (her) with (my) five arrows.

Indra said :

27b-28a. O fool, where is your valour with which you afflict people? Now you desire to fight after taking my support.

Cupid said :

28b-36a. Formerly only that trident-holder, Mahādeva (i.e. Śiva), the god of gods has snatched away my form. My body does not exist. Listen, when I desire to strike a woman, I manifest my form by resorting to a male body. O thousand-eyed (Indra), I shall now execute the mission by resorting to (the body of) a man. When a lady is repeatedly thinking about the form of a man (i.e. about a man) not seen before, I excite the man by resorting to him. In the same way, I shall certainly excite this one of the form of a woman (i.e. I shall certainly excite this woman). There is no doubt about it. O lord of gods, I got the name 'Smara' as I was thought of. Seeing her I shall, (being) like that, resort to the (particular) colour, object or form. My lustre would repel what is to be repelled by means of its brightness, and by resorting to the form of a woman it would allure (even) a strong-minded man; and resorting to a man (-form) I shall secure this woman for you. O Indra, I am formless. I would resort to my (original) form (and) resorting to your body I shall secure her as desired (by you).

36b-38. Having thus addressed the lord of gods, Cupid too, who was the friend of the Spring Season and who had flowers as his weapons, having resorted to the body of that magnanimous (Indra), was eager, looking, with his eyes, at the target of his arrows—the chaste, very meritorious wife of Kṛkala—to strike her.

CHAPTER FIFTYEIGHT

Sukalā Wins

Viṣṇu said :

1-2. Prompted by Rati, Sukalā, the beautiful wife of the vaiśya entered the beautiful grove. The chaste lady saw all the charming grove and then she asked her friend. (She said:) "O friend, to whom does this excellent, very meritorious, divine and

charming grove, which is furnished with all excellent pleasures, belong?" Sukalā joyfully asked her friend (Rati).

Krīḍā (i.e. Rati) said :

3. This grove is endowed with all divine qualities of well-known inherent properties and decorations of flowers and perfumes; it is full of flowers and desired fruits; see, it is of (i.e. it belongs to) Cupid.

4-12. Having heard these words, and full of great joy, and observing the great account of the wicked Cupid, she smelt the fragrance carried by wind. (In it) wind, endowed with fragrance, blew naturally, in such a way that his (i.e. Cupid's) arrow very easily entered her nose; but that (Sukalā) of an excellent face (i.e. beautiful) did not smell the fragrance of the flowers; nor did the very chaste lady enjoy the excellent pleasures. The delightful friend of Cupid, vanquished (by her), was ashamed, and having turned away his face, fell on the ground with bits of leaves. Juice, of an excellent brightness, and decorated with flowers and shoots, fell on the ground from ripe fruits. The flower-juice, of a melancholy nature, fallen from the fruits, was eaten (i.e. drunk) by bees, as a dead man (is eaten up) on the battle-field. Being (thus) eaten (i.e. drunk) by bee, it flew in a stream. It flew slowly only; the birds laughed at it. With many notes, full of joy, they happily roamed (in the grove). The birds happily remained on the mountain in the forest. He, who had resorted to a mean course, was vanquished by Sukalā.

13-14. Cupid's wife Rati, accompanied by Prīti, went to Sukalā, and, with a smile, said to her: "O auspicious one, well-being to you; welcome to you; enjoy happily; your spotless form, delightful to the eyes, is liked by the magnanimous Indra. When you desire (something), tell (me); I shall certainly bring it."

Sūta said :

15-19. Seeing and hearing the two ladies (viz. Rati and Prīti) talking, she said (these) good words: "My very intelligent husband has gone away, taking with him my pleasure. I am united with my husband at the place where he remains. My desire (remains) there, so also my love. This body is without a prop." Both Rati and Prīti, having heard what (Sukalā) said, were

ashamed. Being ashamed, they went to the place where the very mighty Kāma stood. They said to the great hero of a great might, who had drawn his bow, who had resorted to Indra's body (and therefore) who was visible to the eyes: "O you highly intelligent one, she is invincible. Give up (trying) your valour (against her). The magnanimous chaste lady always longs for her husband (only)."

Cupid said :

20. O respectable lady, if she looks at the form of this magnanimous Indra, then I shall certainly strike her.

21-24. Then that lord of gods, of a great form, who had put on a (different) garb, endowed with all pleasures, decorated with all ornaments, wearing divine flowers and garments, (with his body) smeared with divine sandal, and accompanied by that Rati, very sportively and quickly went to that place where the lady looking upon her husband as a deity (i.e. the lady loyal to her husband) stood. He spoke to the magnanimous Sukalā, behaving truthfully: "Formerly I had sent a messenger to you. Why, O auspicious one, do you not show regard for me, who have betaken myself to you?"

Sukalā said :

25-28a. Well-being to you. I am protected by the magnanimous sons of my husband, and by companions; so I am not at all alone. From whom (then) do I have fear? I am protected by brave men everywhere. I do not have much time to talk. I am engaged in my duty towards him. O you very intelligent one, why do you not feel ashamed of dallying with me while your eyes are trickling (i.e. while you are old). Who are you that have come here, and are not afraid even of death?

Indra said :

28b-29. I saw you having come into the grove; but you told me about the brave sons of your husband. How can I see them? Show them to me.

Sukalā said :

30-34. The pious-minded, magnanimous one, whose entire piety is firm, who is always devoted, who is powerful with love,

having established Truth as the chief of his own group (of allies), and placing him (to protect me) along with qualities known as Courage, Resolution, Fate and Intelligence, always protected me. Dharma thus always protects me with the pure qualities of restraint. See, Truth, along with Tranquility and Forbearance, has come to me. Knowledge, who is very powerful and very famous, will never desert me. I am bound with firm bonds of his qualities. He has just come to my vicinity. All (the qualities) like Truth etc. had been now made my protectors. All (qualities like) Piety, Gain and Restraint, Knowledge, Valour protect me only. Why do you solicit me against my will? Who are you, being fearless, that have come here with a female messenger? Truth, Piety, so also Merit and Knowledge etc. are very powerful and are the companions of my husband. They protect me in the house.

35-37. I am always having protection, and am solely devoted to Restraint and Tranquility. Even the lord of Śacī (i.e. Indra) himself is not able to win me over. Even if that powerful Cupid comes, I am always furnished with the armour of truth, and not by anything else. There is no doubt that his arrows would be futile. The great warriors like Dharma (i.e. Piety) etc. will kill you only.

38-39. Go away, run (away); now do not stand here. If you stay (here), though warded off, you will be reduced to ashes. I shall just burn you, as fire would burn wood, and in no other way, when you look at my form without (i.e. in the absence of) my husband.

40-43. Hearing (these words) (uttered by her) in the presence of even Cupid, the thousand-eyed god (i.e. Indra said:) "See her valour. Fight with your valour (with her)." O great king, all those, Indra and others, being afflicted with fear of the great curse, went to their respective places, as they had come. When all of them had gone, that Sukalā, devoted to her husband, and endowed with merit, came to her own house, thinking of her husband (only). That lady, looking upon her husband as her god, then came to her own house, endowed with merit, full of (the merit of) all sacred places and all sacrifices.

CHAPTER FIFTYNINE

Riligious Observances Without One's Wife Are Fruitless

Viṣṇu said :

1-2. Having finished (i.e. having visited) all sacred places, Kṛkala, full of great joy, started for his house along with the leader of the caravan. He always thought like this: 'My worldly existence is fruitful. My dead ancestors, when gratified will go to heaven; not otherwise.'

3-5a. Just then having bound his grandsires (Dharma) spoke to him: "You do not have excellent religious merit." (Dharma) of a divine form and of a huge body said (these) words to Kṛkala: "You do not have the fruit of (your visits to) holy places. In vain have you exerted. You alone are happy (i.e. you have not gratified your dead ancestors etc.); (therefore) you do not have excellent religious merit."

5b-7. Hearing like this, the vaiśya, viz. Kṛkala, was afflicted with pain. (He said to Dharma:) "Who are you that are talking like this? Why are my grandsires bound? Due to the effect of what fault (of mine are they bound)? (Please) tell me the reason of it. Why do I not have the fruit of (my visits to) the holy places? How is my pilgrimage not (fruitful)? If you know, then tell me everything clearly."

Dharma said :

8-19. The entire fruit of the religious merit of him, who, leaving (behind) his pure and most meritorious wife, goes (on a pilgrimage), becomes worthless, not otherwise. All the religious deeds of him, who, leaving (behind) even his wife who is devoted to a pious conduct, who is meritorious, who is engrossed in the vow of loyalty to her husband, who is virtuous, who loves merit, goes to (holy places to) perform religious rites, are done in vain. Not otherwise. In the house of him, whose meritorious and very chaste wife has qualities like being devoted to all (good) practices, being worthy, being intent upon accomplishing moral merit, being devoted to her husband, always loving knowledge gods of great prowess always stay; and his dead ancestors, living in his house, desire bliss. There (i.e. in his house) are present

auspicious rivers like the Ganges and Seas; (and) not at any other place. He, in whose house lives his chaste wife, entirely devoted to truth, has (the credit of having performed) sacrifices; cows and sages (live there), and at no other place. Due to the conduct of his wife all these sacred places and various religious merits (stay) there, and at no other place. The stage of householder is produced (i.e. is possible) due to the contact of a meritorious wife. Highest moral merit is (obtained) from the stage of a householder. There is no such stage on the earth. O vaiśya, the house of a householder is meritorious, is endowed with truth and religious merit, is full of all holy places and is attended by all gods. All beings live (only) after resorting to the stage of a householder. I do not see any other excellent stage (of life) like that. The man in whose house the sacred fire is maintained to the accompaniment of sacred hymns, all gods live, all old practices are followed, gifts are given (is blessed).

20-34. Similarly the house of him who is without a wife, becomes a forest. (In his house) sacrifices are not accomplished (i.e. performed) and various gifts (are not given). Any great vow of a man without a wife is not fruitful. So also no religious rites and no meritorious deeds (are fruitful). To accomplish religious merit there is no holy place like a wife. Listen to the way of the life of a householder. There is no other Dharma in the three worlds (like that of a householder). A man has a house where his wife lives, whether in villages or in a forest. She is the means of all moral merit. There is no holy place like a wife; there is no happiness like a wife. There is no religious merit for the emancipation and well-being (of the husband) like a wife. O you mean man, you go (i.e. you had gone) leaving (behind) your righteous and chaste wife. Leaving (i.e. when you leave) your house and proper course of conduct, where does the fruit of your moral merit remain? When (i.e. since), without her (i.e. in her absence), you offered a śrāddha, therefore, due to that fault only your grandsires are bound. You are a thief; these (grandsires) also are thieves who, being very greedy, enjoyed the food offered by you without her (i.e. in her absence). I shall tell you about the religious merit of a good son, who, full of faith, offers a śrāddha, with (i.e. in which) a piṇḍa (is) offered by his wife. As men are satisfied with drinking nectar, in the same way the dead ancestors are satisfied

with a śrāddha. I am telling you the truth and truth only. A wife is the owner of the stage of a householder. O fool, you have deceived her. You have committed a theft. These your manes, who ate without her (i.e. in her absence) are great thieves. The dead ancestors eat with a pleased mind the food resembling nectar which the (son's) wife prepares with her own hands. With that only they are gratified and become pleased. Therefore, the religious practices of a man do not succeed without his wife. There is no holy place like a wife giving men a good position (i.e. leading them to salvation). The religious practices carried on without (i.e. in the absence of) the wife would become fruitless.

CHAPTER SIXTY

Sukalā's Story Ends

Kṛkala said :

1. O Dharmarāja, now tell me in detail how I would have final beatitude and how my dead ancestors would be liberated.

Dharma said :

2-6. O you noble one, go home. She (i.e. your wife) is experiencing grief without you. Inform your wife, Sukalā practising piety, (of your arrival). Having gone home, offer śrāddha with her hands. Win over the best gods by remembering the holy places. You will have the salvation obtained through pilgrimages to holy places. He who desires to accomplish religious merit without his wife (i.e. all alone), loses (the fruit of) the stage of the householder and would wander alone in a forest. He is unsuccessful in the world, (and) the deities do not respect him. The sacrifices become successful (only) when the housewife remains in the house. All alone (i.e. without his wife) he is not able to accomplish (the fruit of) piety and worldly prosperity.

Viṣṇu said :

7-11a. Having thus spoken to the vaiśya, Dharma left as he had come. That religious-minded Kṛkala also proceeded to his

house. The intelligent one reached his house and saw that chaste wife (of him). The intelligent one reached his own abode along with the leader of the caravan. Seeing her husband, well-versed in Dharma, who had arrived, she performed very auspicious and meritorious (rites) on the arrival of her husband. The religious-minded one told her what Dharma did. The magnanimous one, having heard her husband's words causing delight, and having praised the words of Dharma, agreed with him.

Viṣṇu said:

11b-16a. Then that vaiśya Kṛkala remaining in the chamber of the (idol of the) deity (in his house) devotedly offered, with her, a śrāddha, giving great merit. The dead ancestors, gods, Gandharvas and sages came there in aeroplanes and praised the high-souled couple. I (i.e. *Viṣṇu*), also Brahmā and the great lord (i.e. Śiva) with the goddess (Pārvatī) and all (other) gods with Gandharvas arrived (there). I, Brahmā, and the great god (i.e. Śiva) with the goddess (i.e. Pārvatī), also all gods with Gandharvas, pleased with her truthfulness, said to the two who were well-versed in truth: "Well-being to you along with your wife. O you of a good vow, ask for a boon."

Kṛakala said :

16b-17a. O best gods, due to the association of the merit of which penance, have you come here to grant a boon to me with my wife?

Indra said :

17b-18a. This chaste, noble Sukalā is pleasing and auspicious. We were pleased with her truthfulness. We (therefore) desire to grant you a boon.

18b-23a. (Then) in brief they narrated her former account. Having heard of the magnanimity of her behaviour, the husband was delighted. With her the religious-minded one (i.e. Kṛkala) with his eyes full of joy saluted all the deities, and again and again said : "If now all the magnanimous, ancient three gods (i.e. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva) and other holy sages have favoured me and have come here, then I shall be devoted to gods like this (only) in existence after existence. Due to your grace let me

have liking for piety and truth; and afterwards, O gods of great prowess, if you are pleased, I desire to go to Viṣṇu's heaven with my wife and grandsires."

Gods said :

23b. O noble one, let it be so. Everything will take place (like this) only.

24-32. Then, O king, they showered flowers on the two (i.e. Kṛkala and Sukalā). Gandharvas, knowing the essential nature of music, sang a charming, melodious song, giving great religious merit; and the groups of the celestial nymphs danced. Then the gods with the Gandharvas, praising the chaste lady, went, after giving (Kṛkala) a boon, to their respective abodes, O best king. I have told you (how) a woman is (called) a sacred place. (Now) I shall tell you something else. I have narrated to you this entire, excellent, meritorious account. O king, a man who listens to it is free from all sins. A woman who devoutly listens to the excellent account of Sukalā, is never deserted by good fortune, truth, sons and grandsons. She is delighted with wealth and grains and would be happy with her husband. In existence after existence she would be a loyal wife, and not otherwise. A brāhmaṇa (who listens to the account) would become well-versed in the Vedas; (and) a kṣatriya would be victorious. There is no doubt that there would be wealth and grains in the house of a vaiśya. O king, a man knowing piety would become one of good conduct and happy. A śūdra gets happiness and prospers with sons and grandsons. There is great prosperity adorned with wealth and grains.

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

Pippala's Penance

Vena said :

1. You have described the holy place in the form of wife, the best of all holy places. Now tell about the sacred place in the form of dead ancestors, which is a great emancipater of sons.

Viṣṇu said :

2-7. In the great sacred region (called) Kurukṣetra (there lived) a brāhmaṇa named Kuṇḍala. That noble Kuṇḍala had a good son by name Sukarman. His parents were very old, knew religious practices, and were proficient in sacred precepts. Both the noble ones were afflicted with old age. He, who knew piety, and who was full of sincerity, devotedly and continuously served them night and day. He, intent on (following) all (good) practices, knowing piety and a lover of knowledge, learnt from that (i.e. his) father, many sacred treatises; and he himself massaged the bodies of the two. He also washed their feet, bathed and fed them with devotion and naturally became thoughtful about them. O best king, he (thus) served his mother and father.

Sūta said :

8-11. At the time he lived there was a brāhmaṇa, (a descendent) of the noble Kaśyapa, O best king. He, void of passion, free from jealousy, endowed with pity, charity and restraint, having subdued lust and anger, practised penance without eating food. The intelligent one, solely devoted to knowledge and tranquility, went to Daśāraṇya, and the high-souled one having controlled his senses performed penance (there). Due to the power of his penance, the beings, free from fighting (with one another) lived there, in that age, as it were remaining in one (and the same) womb.

12-28. Seeing that (severe) penance of him, the sages were amazed. (They said:) 'None else has practised penance as this one is doing.' So gods led by Indra, were highly amazed. (They said:) 'Oh what severe penance he is practising? How great is his tranquility and restraint over senses?' Being free from emotion and agitation, and enduring cold, wind and heat, he remained (there) like a mountain. The best brāhmaṇa, disinclined to pleasures of senses, patient at heart, did not hoard anything and did not hear the sound of anyone. Having taken up a position like that, he, with a concentrated mind, meditating upon Brahman, remained there with his lotus-like face full of joy. Resembling stone and wood, he remained motionless like a mountain. Very firm and loving piety he appeared like a post.

His body was afflicted with penance. He was full of faith, and was free from jealousy. (Practising penance) in this way, the intelligent one passed a thousand years. Many ants constructed on this body a huge ant-hill with a heap of clay, as his abode. In the interior of the ant-hill he remained motionless. In this way that brāhmaṇa (named) Pippala practised very great (i.e. severe) penance. The best brāhmaṇa (Pippala) was surrounded on all sides by black serpents. (The serpents) of a strong poison bit that brāhmaṇa of an intense penance. Poison (even) after reaching the vulnerable points of his body did not harm it. Due to the brāhmaṇa's lustre the serpents became peaceful. From his body rose many flames of blazing lustre. They appeared separately. O best man (i.e. O king), they were just like the more (i.e. very) hot (flames) of fire. As the sun, having entered the interior of clouds, shines with his rays, in the same way the brāhmaṇa remaining in the ant-hill shone with his lustre. O best king, angry serpents bit the brāhmaṇa with their teeth, but even after piercing his skin, they did (i.e. could) not cleave (his body), with the tips of their teeth. O lord of kings, in this way the noble sage passed a thousand years in practising penance. The period, attended by cold, rain and heat was thus passed by the noble Pippala who subdued the three times, O great king. In the same way the noble one also ate (i.e. lived on) air.

29-31. He passed three thousand years in practising penance. Then soon the gods showered flowers on his head. (They said to him:) "O you noble one, you know Brahman, you know piety, there is no doubt about it. You have become full of all knowledge (i.e. omniscient) due to your deeds. You will certainly get (i.e. fulfil) whatever desire you have. You, on your own, will have all your desires accomplished (i.e. satisfied)."

32-37. Hearing (these) great words, that large-hearted Pippala, with his neck (i.e. head) devoutly bent down, and full of great joy, spoke (these) words: "O best gods, do that by which this entire world would be under my control. May I be a Vidyādhara." O best king, speaking like this, the intelligent one ceased (to speak). The gods then said to the best brāhmaṇa: "Let it be so." O noble one, having given the boon to that magnanimous (Pippala) they left. When the gods had left, that

best brāhmaṇa Pippala was everyday devoted to sacred knowledge, and thought (as to how he would) control everything. O best king, since then Pippala, the best brāhmaṇa, obtained the status of a Vidyādhara, and was honoured as one moving according to his own desire.

38-41. In this way that brāhmaṇa Pippala attained the status of a Vidyādhara, and became well-versed in all branches of knowledge and the lord of gods. Once that Pippala of great lustre thought: 'I shall have everything under my control. I have been granted the best boon.' The best brāhmaṇa (Pippala) was eager to ascertain it. He would bring (i.e. brought) under control whatever he wanted to. When he thus became confident, he thought : 'In the world there is no other best brāhmaṇa like me.'

Sūta said :

42-46. O king, knowing the thought of that noble Pippala who was thinking like this, the crane which was on the bank of a lake said to Pippala in a melodious tone, charming and full of charity: "Why do you have this great pride? I do not think you have the power to bring everything under your control. This act of subjugating everything is recent (or is on this side). O Pippala, you, whose intellect is confounded, do not know what is ancient (or is on the other side). O brāhmaṇa, why do you in vain entertain pride when you have practised penance for three thousand years?

47-53a. That wise and very intelligent Sukarman, who was the son of Kuṇḍala had all the world under his control. Now listen. That intelligent one knew the recent (or on this side) and the ancient (or on the other side). O Pippala, listen, there is no one so very wise as he was. You are not like (that) Sukarman, the son of Kuṇḍala. He did not give gifts. He did not reflect on knowledge. He never performed acts like offering oblations or sacrifices. He never went on a pilgrimage, nor did he ever offer excellent service to fire for resorting to (i.e. obtaining) religious merit. He moved at will, he was ever a friend of (i.e. always loved) his father and mother. He was endowed with the knowledge of the Vedas, and was well-versed in the meaning of all branches of knowledge. You do not have that knowledge which

even that child (i.e. even as a child) Sukarman had. In vain you are proud."

Pippala said :

53b-60. Who are you in the form of a bird, that are thus censuring me? Why do you condemn my knowledge? Of what kind is the ancient knowledge? Explain that to me in detail. How do you have knowledge (i.e. How have you come to possess knowledge)? Now tell me the scope of the recent (or inferior) as well as of the ancient (or superior knowledge), in detail and accompanied by learning, O best bird; and (tell me) whether you are Brahmā, or Viṣṇu, or Rudra.

The crane spoke :

Your penance does not exist; (therefore) you will not have its fruit. Hear now about the penance which you have not practised. You do not have the virtue which the child of Kuṇḍala had. Nor do you have the knowledge (which he had). Nor have you known the (highest) place (as he knew). O best brāhmaṇa, having gone from here you ask (him) about my form. He, the religious-minded one, will explain to you all knowledge.

Viṣṇu said :

Having heard all that which the crane said, he speedily went to the great hermitage in Daśāraṇya.

CHAPTER SIXTYTWO

Parents As Sacred Places of Pilgrimage

Viṣṇu said :

1-5. (Pippala) having gone to Kuṇḍala's hermitage, full of truthful practices, saw (there) noble Sukarman, greatly devoted to his father and mother, serving (them), possessing great prowess born of truth, of great form and lustre, having great

knowledge, engaged in serving his parents and seated at their feet, tranquil, endowed with great devotion and the great treasure of all knowledge. That high-souled Sukarman, the son of Kuṇḍala, seeing the very intelligent Pippala who had come to the door, quickly got up from his seat and honoured him, (and said to him): "O you glorious, very intelligent Vidyādhara, (please) come."

6-10. The very intelligent (Sukarman) gave him water for washing his feet and a respectful offering, (and said to him): "O you highly intelligent one, are you free from difficulties? Are you all right?" He also asked Pippala that had come (to him) about his well-being. (He said to Pippala:) "I shall explain to you all about your arrival (here) today. You practised penance for three thousand years. O glorious one, you thus practised penance, and obtained a boon from the gods. You secured the power of subjugation, and also (the power of) moving according to your desire. Due to that you have become arrogant, and are unnecessarily proud. Seeing all your movements, the noble crane told you my name and about my excellent knowledge."

Pippala said :

11. Who is that lord, that god, the crane who directed me (to come to you) and told me about all knowledge on the bank of a lake?

Sukarman said :

12-13a. Know that crane who talked to you on the bank of the lake to be the highest god Brahmā, of great knowledge. Speak (out) what else you want to ask. I shall explain it to you.

Viṣṇu said :

13b. O prince, that religious-minded Sukarman thus spoke (to Pippala).

Pippala said :

14. On the earth we have heard that the entire world is under your control. O brāhmaṇa, carefully show me the spectacle.

15-18a. "Today see the spectacle—the cause of controlling the uncontrolable." (Thus) spoke the religious-minded Sukarman to Pippala. Then for convincing (Pippala), Sukarman called to mind the gods. The Guardians of the Quarters like Indra, and also gods led by Agni and many Vidyādharas that were invited came (there). Then the gods led by Agni said to Sukarman : "O brāhmaṇa, tell us the reason for which you remembered us."

Sukarman said :

18b-20a. Here has come this Vidyādhara (named) Pippala. He asks me the reason of my controlling the uncontrolable. I have invited you for convincing this high-souled one. (Please) go to your respective abodes.

20b-24. Thus he spoke to the gods. Then the gods said to that very intelligent Sukarman: "Your seeing us will not be fruitless. Well-being to you. Ask for a boon which you like. We shall grant it. There is no doubt about it." Thus the best gods spoke to him. The best brāhmaṇa having devoutly saluted those gods requested them: "O best gods, grant me always a sincere and firm devotion to my mother and father. This is the best boon (I desire to have). May my father go to Viṣṇu's heaven; similarly, O lords of gods, may my mother (also) go to Viṣṇu's heaven. This is the best boon (I desire to have). I do not solicit any other boon."

The gods spoke :

25. O best brāhmaṇa, you are devoted to your father. O Sukarman, listen, due to your devotion we are always pleased with you.

26-28. O prince, having said like this, the gods went to heaven. Then he (i.e. Sukarman) presented before him (i.e. Pippala) all his grandeur. Pippala also saw that great wonder. The religious-minded (Sukarman) also said to Pippala, the son of Kuṇḍala. (Then Pippala said:) "This is a recent (or interior) form; what kind of form is the ancient (or superior) one? O best among the speakers, tell me about the prowess of both."

29-37. I shall tell you the mark of the ancient form, due to which the worlds, the mobile and the immobile (and gods) led by Indra are delighted. This lord of the world himself, who pervades the entire earth, is the master (of everything). No meditating saint has seen his form. The scriptures, as it were afraid to speak, speak (about him) like this: "He is without hands, feet and nose. He is without ears and mouth." (Yet) he sees all the acts performed by the residents of the three worlds. (Even though he is) without ears he hears their talk. (Thus) he gives good (i.e. proper) evidence (of his omnipresence). Even without any movement, he would go; he is seen everywhere. Even being handless, he can seize (things); (though) footless, he runs. O brāhmaṇa, he, pervading everything though footless, is seen everywhere. He, whom the best gods and sages knowing the truth, do no see, sees them all, stationed in truthful and untruthful positions; whom, the (all-) pervader, pure, the divine being granting divine faculties, the leader of all, Vyāsa, the great meditating saint, knowing piety and material prosperity and of a lustrous form, knows. Vyāsa himself knows him to be the sky, of one colour and endless. (Vyāsa alone knows) this spotless form determined by what is told in the scriptures.

38-49. Mārkaṇḍeya also knows that station. I shall explain to you the recent (form). Listen with a concentrated mind. When the soul of the beings withdraws (everything into himself), he goes all alone; resorting to a bed in the water (i.e. in the ocean) he remains on the seat of the hood of Śeṣa. Resorting to him Janārdana sleeps for a long time. The great meditating sage Mārkaṇḍeya, tormented by the darkness in the water, and desiring a place (for him), dejected due to wandering, saw, while wandering, (Viṣṇu) who was lying on the bed of Śeṣa, who resembled a crore of suns, who was adorned with divine ornaments, who wore divine flowers and garments, who is the lord of all the pervading objects, who was enjoying his sleep at the end of a yuga, who held the conch, the disc and the mace. O best brāhmaṇa, (he also saw) a noble lady, resembling a heap of black collyrium, with her face terrible on account of large teeth, and of a fearful form. The best sage was addressed by her: "O great sage, do not get frightened." There was a very large lotus-leaf, extending over five yojanas. The great goddess

put Mārkaṇḍeya on that leaf. (She said to him:) "Even though Keśava is asleep, you have no (cause for) fear here." The best of the meditating saints said to her: "O you beautiful lady, who are you? When this one is completely won over, you alone have grown." O brāhmaṇa, when thus asked by the sage, the goddess respectfully said: "I am the Vaiṣṇavi (i.e. belonging to Viṣṇu) power of this Keśava who is sleeping on the bed of the serpent. I am here called Kālarātri. O best brāhmaṇa, know me to be thus endowed with all (kinds of) illusion. In the Purāṇas I am described as the great illusion for (i.e. causing) infatuation of the world." O Pippala, speaking thus, that goddess vanished.

50-57a. When the goddess had gone, from his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) navel sprang up a lotus, shining like gold, while Mārkaṇḍeya was looking (at him). From him were born all the worlds, the immobile and the mobile, all the regents of the quarters like Indra, and gods led by Agni. O king, I have presented to you his recent (or inferior) form. This one of the recent (or inferior) form is without any support in his ancient (or superior form). When he would present his body then (only) all the recent (or inferior deities) like Brahmā and all worlds have bodies, O Pippala. All the regions that are there in the three worlds are recent. This soul of the beings is ancient. The meditating saints well see him, who is of the form of final beatitude, of the nature of Brahman—the highest place—, who is the universal soul, is pure and endowed with divine powers. O Vidyādhara, I have explained to you the entire nature of the ancient one. Tell me what more I (should) explain.

Pippala said :

57b-60a. O you of a good vow, how has this great knowledge risen in you? You know the recent (or inferior) as well as the ancient (or superior) station. The great knowledge of the three worlds abides in you. I (however) do not see (in you) great devotion to penance. Tell me the power of performing a sacrifice, of acting as a priest at a sacrifice, of (the visit to) a holy place, if you have done these. Due to what have you thus (obtained) all knowledge?

Sukarman said :

60b-78a. I do not at all know (what) penance (is). I have

not emaciated my body. I do not know performing a sacrifice, or acting as a priest at a sacrifice or going to holy places. I have not practised meditation, not attained the meritorious period as a result of good acts. One (thing) only I know clearly and well, (and that is) the worship of (my) father and (my) mother. With both my hands I myself everyday do the meritorious washing of the feet of my mother and father. Engaged in contemplation at three times everyday I massage their bodies, and bathe and feed them. With devotion I obtain the water with which the feet of those two only i.e. my mother and father are washed, and with great devotion I worship them. During that time a measureless gain comes to me. With my heart having pure thoughts I worship them thrice (a day). O Pippala, I am one who moves freely and comfortably. What is the use to me of any other penance or of emaciating my body? Now what good would acrue to me by good (i.e. meritorious) pilgrimages or by other (acts of) virtue? O brāhmaṇa, I have seen that to be the fruit of serving one's father, which is obtained by performing all sacrifices. Similarly serving the mother gives a good position (i.e. bliss) to the sons. It is the all-in-all and the essence of all acts in the three worlds. By serving his mother the son gets (i.e. goes to) a (good) world. Similarly great religious merit is produced due to the service to the father. There is no doubt that there (only lie) the Ganges, the holy place like Gayā, or like Puṣkara, where the father would live (i.e. lives) with the mother. By serving the father the son gets the merit of visiting these sacred places and other various holy and auspicious places. O brāhmaṇa, a good son obtains the fruit of charity and penance by serving his father (and mother). Any other customary observance leads to affliction. A son obtains excellent religious merit by serving his father (and mother), which is the all-in-all of his deeds in this and in the next world. Now listen to the auspicious merit when as a son he serves his elders—the mother and the father—when they are alive. Gods are pleased with him, and also the sages who love religious merit. Due to service of the father (and mother done) here (i.e. in this world) the three worlds are pleased. He, who everyday would wash (i.e. who washes) the feet of his mother and father, has everyday a bath in the Ganges.

78b-82. I shall (now) tell you about the religious merit of him who always devoutly feeds his father and mother with sweet food and drinks. The son gets that fruit which is got by performing the horse-sacrifice. He, who devoutly worships his elders (i.e. parents) with (i.e. by giving them) tāmbūla, coverings, drinks, eatables and pure food, would become omniscient, and would obtain glory and fame. A son, on seeing his mother or father, should talk to them with joy. They are the treasures,[1] that, being pleased, live in his house. They are the cows, that love the son and always give him happiness.

CHAPTER SIXTYTHREE

Merit Resulting from Service of Parents

Sukarman said :

1-6a. O best brāhmaṇa, the son properly gets (the religious merit of) a bath similar to the one in all the holy places when the drops of water, (falling from the bodies) of the mother and the father who have bathed, fall on the entire body of the son. I shall (now) tell you about the religious merit of the son who serves his father who is fallen, who is maimed, who is old, who is weak (in doing) all acts, who is ill, who is suffering from leprosy, and also his mother like that (i.e. in such a condition). There is no doubt that Viṣṇu has his mind pleased with him. He goes to Viṣṇu's heaven, unobtainable by (even) the meditating saints. That son of a sinful mind who abandons his parents who are maimed, helpless, old, or are suffering from a serious disease, obtains (i.e. goes to) a terrible hell, full of worms.

6b-22. I shall now tell you about the sin of (i.e. committed by) a son, who, when called by his old parents, does not go (to

1. Nidhayaḥ—Nidhis are the treasures of Kubera. They are nine: Mahāpadma, Padma, Śaṅkha, Makara, Kacchapa, Mukunda, Kunda, Nīla and Kharva.

them). There is no doubt that the fool becomes the eater of feces and a village-pig; and then again he is born as a dog for (the next) thousand existences. That son, who, without feeding his old mother and father living in his house, himself eats (i.e. eats alone), would eat (i.e. drink) urine, (and eat) feces for a thousand existences. The sinner would be (born) as a black serpent for two hundred existences. He, the sinner, who goes forward by neglecting his old mother or father, is born as a shark for crores of existences. That sinful son, who censures them with bitter words, would be (born as) a tiger and then would be born as a bear. That wicked-minded son who would not worship his mother or father would dwell in (the hell called) Kumbhīpāka for as long as a (period covered by) a thousand yugas. For a son there is no other holy place, that would emancipate him and would cause his well-being here and in the next world, like his mother or like his father. Therefore, O you very intelligent one, I worship the deity in the form of my father (and) the deity in the form of my mother. I have by that become a devotee devoted to all gods. Excellent knowledge is produced (in me) due to the grace of my mother and father. Which wise man does not worship his mother or father? O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of his having studied the Vedas, with the Aṅgas and the Upāṅgas, and along with scriptures and (other) branches of knowledge, who has not honoured his father? The Vedas are useless for him who has not honoured his mother. Also, O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of sacrifices, penance, (giving) gifts and worships (of deities)? (All this) becomes fruitless (in the case) of him, who, while living (as a householder) in his house, has not worshipped his mother and has not worshipped his father. This (i.e. honouring his parents) alone is the duty of a son; this (alone) is a holy place among (i.e. for) men. This alone is the final beatitude of a son; similarly (this alone) is the auspicious fruit of his existence. This (alone) is the sacrifice of (i.e. performed by) a son. There is no doubt about it.

23-29. Intent on worshipping the father (and the mother, a son) who everyday devoutly worships his father (and mother), has all that has been said before. He, who has worshipped his mother also, has undoubtedly obtained the fruit of giving gifts, or of (visiting) a holy place, or of (performing) a sacrifice. All

the acts giving merit, like sacrifices etc., are well accomplished by him who has everyday worshipped his father with good (i.e. great) devotion. For this only I have studied and learnt the science of religious merit. O Pippala, a son should always be intensely devoted to his father. Formerly, king Yadu obtained happiness when his father was pleased; (and) listen, how formerly when the father was angry, Ruru, a Paurava (king), obtained great sin on the earth, when cursed by his father. When I served these two (i.e. my parents) I got knowledge like this. By the grace of these I obtained an excellent fruit.

CHAPTER SIXTYFOUR

Mātali's Discourse on Old Age

Pippala said :

1-2. Tell me in detail, how, by the grace of his father, Yadu obtained happiness and enjoyed well. O son of Kuṇḍala, tell me also in detail how Ruru suffered as a result of his sin, O best brāhmaṇa.

Sukarman said :

3-11a. Listen, I shall tell you the account of the very meritorious Nahuṣa, and the noble Yayāti, (the account) which destroys sin. Nahuṣa, the lord of the earth sprang from (i.e. was born in) the Soma dynasty. He made many matchless gifts. He performed an excellent century of the horse-sacrifices (i.e. performed a hundred excellent horse-sacrifices). He also performed a hundred Vājapeya sacrifices and many kinds of (other) sacrifices. By the power of his religious merit he obtained (i.e. went to) Indra's world. He made his very intelligent son Yayāti, endowed with truthfulness, having piety as his valour, the protector of his subjects (i.e. the king). The king (Nahuṣa) went to (i.e. obtained) Indra's position. His son Yayāti, endowed with truthfulness, who (occupied) his place (i.e. the throne), would protect (i.e. protected) the subjects religiously. He himself would

look (i.e. looked) after his subjects and the respective duties. Having learnt about excellent duty, he, who knew righteousness got sacrifices performed. He did everything like performing sacrifices, (visiting) holy places, giving gifts (giving) religious merit. The intelligent son of the king (Nahuṣa) ruled truthfully for eighty thousand years in those days. The glorious Yayāti passed that much time (in truthfully ruling his subjects).

11b-15. He had four sons who were powerful and valorous like him. I shall tell (you) their names. Listen with a concentrated (i.e. attentive) mind. His eldest son was Ruru by name, who was very powerful. The second son was named Puru; the third one was Kuru; the fourth son of the king was Yadu by name, who was religious-minded. Thus the noble Yayāti had four sons. By means of their lustre and manliness, they resembled their father in valour. Thus Yayāti ruled his kingdom righteously. Great were his fame and glory in the three worlds.

Viṣṇu said :

16-18. Once the greatest brāhmaṇa, Nārada, the son of Brahmā, went to Indra's world to see Indra, O king. The thousand-eyed god (i.e. Indra) saw the brāhmaṇa (i.e. Nārada) who was omniscient, who was proficient in (all kinds of) knowledge, whose lustre was like fire, (when) he came there. With his neck bent in devotion (i.e. bowing in devotion), he seated the best sage, who was honoured with a respectful offering,[1] on an auspicious seat, and asked him:

Indra said :

19. Where have you come from today? For what purpose have you come here? O brāhmaṇa, O great sage, what very dear to you should I do today?

Nārada said :

20-21. O king of gods, O very intelligent one, I am pleased with all that you did devoutly and with what you said. I shall answer your questions. I have now safely come to your house

1. Madhuparka—a respectful offering made to a guest. Its usual ingredients are: Curds, ghee, water, honey and sugar.

from the earth. After having seen (Yayāti), the son of Nahuṣa, I have come to seek you.

Indra said :

22-23. Which king, being learned, wise, virtuous, and full of righteousness, always protects his subjects truthfully? On the earth, which is the king, who knows the Vedas, to whom the brāhmaṇas are dear, who is pious, who is conversant with the Vedas, who is a sacrificer, who is a donor, and who is a great devotee?

Nārada said :

24-30. With these qualities was endowed the powerful son of Nahuṣa, due to whose truthfulness and valour all people were well-settled. Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, is like you on the earth. As you are in the heaven, enhancing the prosperity (of your subjects), so he is on the earth enhancing the prosperity (of his subjects). O great king, that king Yayāti, superior to his father, performed a hundred horse-sacrifices, and also a hundred Vājapeya sacrifices. Devoutly he gave gifts in many forms like thousands of lakhs and hundreds of crores of cows. In the same way, he performed a crore of sacrifices, so also lakhs of sacrifices. He also gave gifts like grants of land to brāhmaṇas. He has protected Dharma in its full form. As you are ruling here in the heaven, so Yayāti, Nahuṣa's son, the best king, who was endowed with these qualities, truthfully ruled for eighty thousand years.

The intelligent Sukarman said :

31-47. The lord of gods, having heard like this from the best of sages, reflected, and was afraid of (his) protecting the Dharma. (He thought:) 'Formerly, by the power of hundred sacrifices, the brave Nahuṣa went to (i.e. obtained) my position of Indra, and became the king of gods. He fell from that as a result of Śacī's intelligence. This great king who is like his father in valour, will undoubtedly reach Indra's position. There is no doubt about it. With this or that means (i.e. by hook or crook) I shall bring the king to heaven.' The lord of gods, who was afraid of him, thought like this. Then the king of gods, O best king, due to the great fear of that king Yayāti, sent his messenger to bring him to

heaven. (He sent) Nahuṣa's aeroplane endowed with all pleasures, and his charioteer Mātali with the aeroplane. Mātali, who was sent by the lord of gods to bring the very intelligent (Yayāti) went there where (Yayāti), Nahuṣa's son, stayed. As Indra, shines in his assembly, in the same way Yayāti, the religious-minded (king), shone in his own assembly. The charioteer of the king of gods said to that magnanimous king, whose ornament was truth: "O king, listen to my words. I have now been sent to you by the king of gods. Do, with a good (i.e. devoted) mind, all that the king of gods tells. O lord, you should come to Indra's world; (do) not (do) otherwise (i.e. do come), after having entrusted your kingdom to your son, and after having performed the best and the last sacrifice (in your life). O son of Nahuṣa, the very lustrous king lives there. Purūravas, of a great power, the noble-minded Vipracitti (also live there). Śibi lives there, Manu, king Ikṣvāku, the intelligent (king) named Sagara, and your father Nahuṣa (live there). The grateful Ṛtavīrya, and the noble Śantanu, and Bharata, Yuvanāśva, also king Kārtavīrya, —(all these) kings, after having offered various sacrifices are rejoicing in heaven. Many other kings also, very much devoted to the performance of sacrifices, are all rejoicing as a result of their meritorious acts in heaven with Indra; and you again know all the Dharma and are well established in Dharma. (Therefore,) O king, rejoice with Śakra (i.e. Indra) in heaven."

Yayāti said :

48. What deeds have I done due to which this request is made to me by you and by Indra, the lord of gods? Tell me all that.

Mātali said :

49-52. Since, O king, you performed meritorious acts like giving gifts, and performed sacrifices for eighty thousand years, (therefore) due to (i.e. as a result of) your deeds, go to heaven, O lord of the earth. Make friendship with the lord of gods. Go to the abode of gods (i.e. heaven). O you highly intelligent one, leave your body having the five (elements) as its constituents, on the earth; and taking up a divine form, enjoy pleasures after your heart (i.e. as you like). O lord of men, pleasures in heaven

solicit (i.e. wait for) you in accordance with the sacrifices which are performed by you, or gifts which are given by you or penance which is practised by you, on the earth.

Yayāti said :

53. O Mātali, how should one go to the world obtained (according to one's deeds) by leaving the body with which good or bad deeds would be (i.e. are) accomplished on the earth?

Mātali said :

54-55. O king, men go to him due to divine (deeds) after leaving the body there (i.e. on the earth) only, where they have obtained this body of the nature of the five (elements). All other men also, who obtain merit or demerit, go down (i.e. to the hell) or up (i.e. to the heaven) after leaving the body (here).

Yayāti said :

56-60. O Mātali, having produced merit or demerit with the body of the nature of the five (elements), all other men do go up or down. What is the difference due to which one would leave (i.e. leaves) the body on the earth, O you who know moral virtue? (How do you say that) the body would fall (i.e. falls) as a result of (one's) sin or religious merit? In the mortal sphere, O charioteer, an example is directly seen. I, (therefore), do not see a greater difference between sinful or meritorious deeds. Why does a man, a mortal, leave the body with which he performs deeds like truthful behaviour? The soul and the body are both friends (of each other). The well-determined soul goes after leaving his friend viz. the body.

Mātali said :

61-65. O king, you have said the truth. He goes after leaving the body. There is (then) no connection of the soul with that body. Since this (body) of the nature of the five (elements) is always worn out in the joints, is troubled by old age, and always damaged by diseases, he (i.e. the soul) does not desire to stay here (i.e. in it). Being agitated and troubled, the soul leaving it (i.e. the body) departs. Due to truthfulness, acts of religious

merit, gifts, religious observance and restraints, sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice, (visits to) holy places, and self-control, and also due to good deeds of great religious merit old age is not at all undergone. (On the other hand,) O great king, it attacks the body by means of sins.

Yayāti said :

66. O best one, please tell me in detail, from what old age has sprung up and why it troubles the body.

Mātali said :

67-95. I shall describe to you the cause of old age; and why it has sprung up in the body, O you best king. The body of the nature of the five elements, is resorted to by the five objects of sense. O king, when the soul leaves the body, it (i.e. the body) is burnt. O king, when blazing with fire the body burns along with the fluids. From it smoke is produced, and from smoke clouds are produced. Water proceeds from the clouds; the earth becomes ready for water as a chaste woman in her menses implores water. From that odour is produced, and fluid is produced from odour, O best king. From the fluid food is produced, and semen is produced from food. There is no doubt about this. From semen body is produced; and body is surely ugly. As the earth (element) would produce odour and it moves on the earth through fluids, similarly the body would always move. It is everywhere the substratum of fluids. From it odour is produced and again fluid would be (produced) from odour. From it is produced great fire; O king, mark the analogy. As fire is produced from wood, and would illumine wood, in the same way in the body fire is produced from fluid. It moves there (in the body) and, O king, it always nourishes the body. As long as there is preponderence of fluid (in the body) the soul is tranquil. Fire moving (in the body) like that remains in the form of hunger. Being sharp it desires food with water; O king, it receives the gift—food and water also. The fire consumes blood and semen also like that; there is no doubt about it. Due to that there would be consumption destroying the entire body. O king, when there would be preponderence of fluid, the fire is put down. Being troubled by the fluid, it is produced in the form of fever. The

fire having arrested the neck, the back, the waist, the anus remains in all the joints. (Thus) the fire moves on in the body. Its preponderence always continues to exist, and nourishes the body on all sides. (When) the fluid is restrained it then becomes powerful. Being excessive due to power, it would move the vital parts of the body through the semen. Due to that lust is produced; and O king, it would become (i.e. becomes) of the nature of a dart. O king, it is called the fire of lust, which destroys strength. Due to addiction to coitus destruction (takes place) in the body. A being oppressed by the fire of lust would resort to a female. Due to addiction to sexual intercourse, the body which is made violent and emaciated by lust, would become void of lustre, and there is a loss of strength (in the body). The (already) weak body becomes (more) weak when urged on by fire. That fire would consume blood and semen in the body. Due to the consumption of semen and blood, the body becomes dispirited. A violent wind of a terrible form is produced; and then he would be pale, tormented with grief and of a vacant mind. He moves, having in his mind that woman whom he has seen or about whom he has heard. When the course of the mind (i.e. the mind) is greedy, there is no satisfaction in (i.e. of) the body. When the lustful man, ugly or handsome, becomes weak due to brooding and the loss of flesh and blood, there appears old age in the body (being) consumed by the fire of lust. Due to that, he being (more) lustful, becomes older and older day by day. As a usurer thinks of money, so he thinks of a woman in (i.e. for) coitus; so also, O lord of men, there is a loss of his lustre. From that a body is produced, and he perishes. Then undoubtedly fire in the form of old age is again produced; and then there is a terrible fever in the form of (i.e. of the nature of) consumption in the beings. All the immobile and the mobile ones being tormented by fever and by many other troubles, perish. All this I have told you; what else should I tell?

CHAPTER SIXTYFIVE

Mātali on Why the Body Is Left Behind

Yayāti said :

1. O Mātali, tell me the reason, why this body, the protector of Dharma, does not go to heaven with the soul.

Mātali said :

2-9. The five elements do not go together (with the soul); in the company of the soul, O king. All of them come together in the village of the body. All of them, afflicted by old age, go to their respective abodes. Since the earth is created with a preponderance of fluid, it being wet due to the fluids becomes soft, O king. It is pierced by ants and rats. Holes are formed into it, and also anthills with large interiors. In the same way inflammation of the glands of the neck and itch are produced in the body. O best of men, this body is also cleft by worms. Enlargements (of parts like the spleen), instantly troubling, are also produced in it. O son of Nahuṣa, this body is full of such defects. How will it go to heaven with the life, O lord of men? The earthly part is settled in the body for the vital air essential to digestion. The body does not come (i.e. go) to heaven. It remains here as the earth does. I have told you all this along with a heap of earthy blemishes.

CHAPTER SIXTYSIX

Mātali on the Universality of Suffering

Yayāti said :

1-2. O Mātali, listen, (we see that) the body falls due to sin and also due to religious merit. On the earth I do not see what difference religious merit makes. The body is produced again (just) as it fell before. Tell me in detail how the body is produced.

Mātali said :

3-16. In the case of the hellish beings, just in a moment, the (hellish) body is produced from the (five) elements due to impious acts only. In the same way, due to religious merit, a divine body (in the manner of that) of the gods is instantly produced from the essences oft he elements. That body of the magnanimous ones, (which is produced) due to the mixture of the (fruits) of deeds should be known to be of four kinds according to the transformation of deeds. The immobile ones in the form of grass and bushes should be known as the ones born by sprouting up. Worms, insects and moths should be known to be born from the sweat of living beings. O king, all birds, serpents and crocodiles are oviparous. Human beings and quadrupeds should be known to be viviparous. When the earth is 'cooked' by heat, it is moistured by water and is scattered by wind (into loose particles). Then the seed approaches the soil in such a way that the seeds that are sown and are watered, become soft and attain the state of roots. From the root there is the rise of a shoot. From a shoot a leaf springs up. From a leaf a hollow stock comes up; from that a stem comes up; and from that the *prabhava* (power). From it would be (produced) *Kṣīra* (the sap), and from the sap there is the rise of *tandula*(the gram?), from the gram come up the ripened *oṣadhayaḥ* (herbs). They are said to be seventeen—the best ones—beginning with barley and ending with rice. The herbs are rich with the wealth of fruits. The remaining ones are said to be trifling. These were first cleansed and cut and crushed by the sages with winnowing baskets, mortars and (other) vessels. With water in a pan and fire, they, which have six varieties, undergo alteration, have many tastes due to the combinations of their respective tastes. O king, they have six varieties like that which is consumed, eaten, drunk, licked, sucked and bitten (and eaten). They have six tastes like the sweet (taste) etc. That food which is eaten by living beings through (i.e. in the form of) balls and mouthfuls, settles all the vital airs in the stomach one by one.

17-18. That (vital) air divides into two the food that is consumed (but) not digested. Having got into the food and having separated the digested food into (i.e. having created in it) various properties, having put water above fire and that food

above the water, that (vital air) Prāṇa itself remains below the water and slowly blows the fire.

19-21. The fire being blown by the wind makes the water very hot. That food again, due to the contact of heat, is digested wholly. That (food) which is digested, becomes divided into two—the secretion is separated, and the liquid is separated. The useless divided into twelve (kinds of) impurity would go (i.e. goes) out of the body. (The outlets are:) ears, eyes, nose, tongue, teeth, lips, organ of generation, anus. (These) would pour out impurities (like) perspiration, faeces, urine. They are said to be twelve.

22-38. In the lotus of the heart, all around, the arteries are confined. (The vital air) Prāṇa places that subtle liquid into their openings; and then that prāṇa fills those arteries with that liquid. Those arteries wholly furnish that liquid to the body. Then that liquid remaining in the arteries is digested by the heat of the body. It is digested in two ways. Skin, flesh, bones, marrow, fat, blood are produced. Fine, soft, short hair and flesh are produced from blood; hair and sinews are produced from flesh. From the sinews are produced marrow and bones. Marrow of the flesh is due to bones. The healthy semen, of the nature of procreation is due to the strength of the marrow. These twelve are said to be the transformations of (i.e. brought about by) the satisfied one. Semen is its transformation, and the body is born from semen. When at the time favourable for conception defectless semen remains in the womb (of a woman), it, sent forth by that vital air, becomes one (i.e. united) with the blood of the woman. At the time of the emission of the semen, the soul, united with the organs of sense, and always being controlled by his own acts, enters the womb. The semen with the blood (of the woman) would be (turned into) a foetus in a day. Then within five nights bubbles would be formed in the foetus. It takes the form of flesh in the five forms; neck, head, shoulder (s), spine and belly; so also hands and feet, the two sides, waist, and (the other parts of) the body; the limbs are produced one by one within two months. After three months, hundreds of sharp joints are produced (i.e. formed). Fingers etc. are produced (i.e. are formed) one by one in four months. After five months mouth, nose and ears are produced (i.e. formed). Within six months, the row of teeth,

so also tongue and nails are formed, so also cavities in the ears are formed. So also are formed anus, penis, organ of generation and the male organ of generation. The joints which (are present) in the limbs, are formed within seven months. In the eighth month the head with the entire body with limbs and with each limb clearly separated is formed. He is complete and endowed with the five. Due to the power of the food of (i.e. eaten by) the mother and by the tastes of six kinds, fixed in the umbilical cord, it (i.e. the foetus) grows day by day.

39-48. Then the soul would have recollection in this entire body (i.e. when the entire body is formed). He is conscious of (former) happiness and unhappiness and sleep and dream seen before: 'I, who was dead, am born again, I, who was born, died. I saw (i.e. was born in) many existences in many ways. Now I am just born, and have received (i.e. undergone) sacraments. I shall hereafter perform righteous deeds, by which I shall not be born (i.e. conceived) in a womb.' While remaining in the womb, he just thinks: 'After I come out from the womb (i.e. after I am born) I shall study (i.e. obtain) highest knowledge that would cause the cessation of the worldly existence.' The soul, certainly very much troubled by the great affliction in the womb, lives (there) and would think (i.e. thinks) of the means to salvation. As one who has gone over an excellent (i.e. high) mountain, stays there unhappily, in the same way, the soul, afflicted by the outer skin of the embryo, remains (in the womb) with the body wet with the fluid in the womb. As someone, being put into an iron-vessel is baked by fire, in the same way (the soul) put into the vessel of womb is baked by the digestive fire in the stomach. Its parts are continuously pierced by needles resembling the colour of fire. The pain he suffers (due to these), would be (i.e. is) eightfold in the womb. There is no other abode anywhere else like the one in the womb. The souls have immense suffering and a very fierce danger.

49-66a. Thus is narrated the suffering in the womb of (i.e. experienced by) all beings—mobile and immobile—according to the wombs (in which they are confined). The bewildered soul that is being born has (to suffer) a crore-fold more pain due to being pressed by the thong of the womb than he has experienced in the womb. Very great affliction takes place in the case

of (i.e. is experienced by) (the soul) coming out of the womb, and being squeezed like a sugar-cane due to being pounded by destructive hammers, and by means of the air (passing out at the time) of delivery. He does not get any protection. As the sugar-canes being pressed by the machine become sapless, in the same way the body remaining in the womb is caused to fall (out of it) by the pressure of the thong. It has limbs; it is of a round shape; it is tied by the bonds of sinews. It is smeared with blood, flesh and marrow, and is the receptacle of substances like excrement and urine; it is covered with hair, down and nails; and it is the principal abode of diseases. It has one gate (in the form) of the mouth and is adorned with eight windows.[1] It has the (two) doors of the two lips, and is possessed of teeth, tongue and throat. It has the arteries and the stream of perspiration, and is overwhelmed with phlegm and bile. It is approached by old age and grief. It remains in the fire in the mouth of Death. It is overcome with lust and anger, and is pressed by winds; it is effected by desire for enjoyments; it is hidden, it is under the sway of attachment and hatred. Every limb, big and small, has a complexion; it is covered by the outer skin of the embryo; it comes out through the lonely and narrow passage of the womb. It is moistened with excretion, urine and blood; it is due to the six (kinds of) marrow. It should be known that there is collection of the bones in the skeleton numbering three hundred and a hundred more (i.e. four hundred). There are five hundred muscles. It is all around covered with small soft hair numbering three crores and half. The body is full of crores of these gross and subtle, visible and invisible, fleshy tubular organs from within. There is perspiration, and due to those it is eternally impure. The teeth were said to be thirty-two in number, and the nails are said to be twenty. It should be known that (the quantity of) bile (in the body) is one kuḍava; in the same way the quantity of phlegm is half an āḍhaka. (The quantity of) marrow is five palas; and the buttocks are half of it. The lump of flesh is five palas; fat is ten palas; thick blood is three palas; the quantity of marrow is four times that of the blood. Semen is half a kuḍava; and the power of men is half of it. It is said that

1. Gavākṣāṣṭaka—The eight apertures of the human body are: the two ears, the two eyes, the two nostrils, organ of excretion and organ of generation (the ninth is the mouth).

one thousand palas of flesh (exist in) a corporeal frame. It should be known that the quantity of blood is a hundred palas, and there is no (definite) measure (of the quantity) of faeces and urine.

66b-83a. Thus, O king, there always is the residence of the soul (in the body). The impure body is (the residence) of the soul, which is produced by the bondage of (his) deeds. The body is produced due to the combination of the semen (of the male) and the blood (of the female). It is always united with faeces and urine; therefore it is said to be impure, like an externally pure pot full of faeces from within. This body would be (i.e. is) impure even though it is cleansed by voiding of excrement. This body is impure because the very pure five products of the cow[1] and offering quickly become impure after reaching it. Agreeable and fragrant food and drinks quickly become impure on reaching it (i.e. on being consumed). Which other object is more impure than it (i.e. the body)? O men, do you not see that everyday the foul-smelling excrement, the companion of (i.e. living in) the body, goes out of it? Then how can its support be pure? Like a charcoal being rubbed, the body, though cleansed with the five products of the cow or with water containing darbhas, never becomes pure. How can that body, from which the streams of phlegm and urine flow everyday, as streams (of water) from a mountain, be cleansed? There is not a single part which is pure in the body, the receptacle of all impurity, except (the soul). Even though the hand is cleansed with clay and water, by day or at night, it can never be pure. (And yet) the men are not free from attachment. Though this body is carefully decorated with excellent incenses etc., yet, like the dog's tail that is bent, it does not give up its nature. Wool that is naturally black can never become white; similarly the body, though cleansed, does not become pure. This world, smelling its own bad odour, and seeing its excrement, does not get detached, though (by doing this) he (i.e. a man) troubles his nose. Oh! see the greatness of attachment, which has deluded the world? Smelling, seeing his own foul things, man has not lost interest in the body. What other cause for detachment can be pointed out to a man, who does not

1. Pañcagavya—The five products of the cow taken collectively: milk, curds, clarified butter or ghee, urine and cowdung.

become detached by the odour of his body? The entire world is pure, but the body is highly impure, by the touch of the dirty parts of which even a pure (object) would become impure. The cleansing of the body is said to be (i.e. recommended) for removing the application of sandal paste. When both (the sandal and the dirt) are removed, (a man) becomes pure by the purification of his thoughts.

83b-93a. This mortal, foul-smelling body, impure in thoughts, does not become pure with all the water of the Ganges and with besmearing the body with a large quantity of clay. The wicked heart is not purified by baths at holy places and austerities. The body of a man, whose mind is impure, does not become pure even though washed at a holy place or even after entering fire. There is neither heaven for him, nor hell (also). (The) best thing is burning the body. Purification of mind is the greatest purification, and is the main thing in all acts. A beloved (wife) is embraced with one thought, a daughter with another. The attitude varies even in the case of things that are not separate. A chaste woman would think about her son in one way, and about her husband in another way. In this way, O magnanimous one, the (variety) of nature is explained, since even though embraced by his wife, he should not make her void of thoughts. A man would not eat various kinds of food, so also fragrant tasty things, without interest. Therefore thought (or interest) is the cause everywhere (i.e. in all one's dealings). With effort purify your mind; what is the use of other external purifications? The soul, pure due to pure thoughts, obtains (i.e. goes to) heaven and salvation. The smearing with the excrement and urine of ignorance and attachment would perish (i.e. be removed) by means of purifiers (like) the spotless water of knowledge and the clay of detachment. Thus they know this body to be impure by its (very) nature. One should know it to be worthless and useless, like the essence of a plantain-tree.

93b-102a. He, who, knowing the body to be full of blemishes like this, becomes relaxed, crosses the worldly existence, and remains with (i.e. has) a firm conviction. Thus the affliction due to birth is said to be very painful. That sense which the human being has, due to the fault of ignorance, and due to various kinds of deeds, perishes when he is born. Feverish heat is produced

in the case of human beings, when a human being is afflicted by being painfully pressed by the thong of the womb, and by the fearful external air due to his contact with delusion. Due to that feverish heat great delusion is caused. Then in the case of the deluded one, loss of memory takes place quickly. In the case of that being, attachment is produced during that existence only, due to the loss of his memory and due to his former deeds. The world (i.e. people) being attached and deluded, proceeds (proceed) to do what ought not to be done. They do not know themselves, nor do they know the highest deity. They do not listen to the (advice relating to) highest good, nor, though having eyes, do they see, like a person, tumbling at every step, even though walking slowly along an even path. Though they have intelligence, and though they are advised by the wise, they do not realise (the truth). Due to that a man going after (i.e. led by) greed is afflicted in the worldly existence.

102b-128. In the absence of a text (about the description of the soul's existence in) the womb, Śiva has propounded a sacred text to tell the affliction of (the soul's existence in) it (and) leading to salvation. It is a great wonder that even when a man has known that (text propounded by) Śiva, he does not accomplish what is good for himself. Since the sense-organs and intellect are not (properly) developed, there is great affliction even in childhood. The blessed (child), though desiring to speak or to act, is not able to do so. Cutting of teeth is very painful, and there is affliction also due to unsteadiness, wind, various child-diseases and planets harming children. With his body surrounded (i.e. overcome) by thirst and hunger, (the child) sometimes stays (at one place and sometimes) moves. A child would indulge in eating excretion, urine etc, due to ignorance. The child suffers pain due to his ears being pierced, due to being beaten by the mother and the father, due to learning the letters (i.e. the alphabet) and due to punishment (given by) teachers and others. How can there be happiness in youth, (to a young man) the functions of whose organs of sense are deluded, who is troubled with the disease of lust and who is always afflicted with diseases? Due to jealousy there is great affliction. Affliction is caused by delusion. The attachment in an angry (young man) leads to unhappiness only. Troubled with the fire of passion he does not

get sleep at night. How can there be happiness even by day due to the anxiety to get money? The drops of semen of a man with his body prostrated (over the bodies) of women, do not lead to happiness like drops due to (i.e. of) perspiration. They know that the pleasure obtained from (union with) women is the same as (obtained by one) being struck (i.e. bitten) by insects, or as of a helpless lepor due to the trouble caused by the fire of scratching. It should be known that the pleasure in (i.e. obtained from) women is like that which one feels due to anxiety about getting money; it is not at all different. The same is the pang of a mortal; without that joy is had by one's mind. Then it goes from one to another to whom it had gone before. Ultimately it is the same; it does not change. Who else is more insensible than one who, seeing his dear one that is thus affected by old age, or that is sick, or his own extraordinary child troubled by old age, is not detached? A being, though overcome with old age, is treated with contempt due to his weakness by his wicked servants. An old man is not able to achieve (the four goals viz.) righteousness, worldly prosperity, sensual enjoyments and salvation. Therefore while young one should practise piety. Inequality (i.e. disturbance) in wind, bile and phlegm etc. is called a disease. This body is (so) called due to the congregation of wind etc. Therefore one should know that this body of the soul is full of diseases. In addition to (diseases caused by) wind etc. the human being meets with many kinds of afflictions due to the diseases of the body. They can be known by oneself. What else should I tell? In this body remain one hundred one (kinds of) death. Among them one is united with Kāla (i.e. god of death). Others are adventitious. Those that are said to be adventitious, are alleviated by means of medicines, muttering of sacred hymns, sacrifices and gifts; but death brought about by Kāla cannot be stopped. Untimely death might not occur by eating poison, (yet) a man would not eat it without fear, for he is afraid of an untimely death. For human beings there are various gates (leading) to death like many diseases; so also animals like serpents; poisons and employment of magical spells for malevolent purposes. Even the physician of gods[1] himself cannot cure a man who is afflicted

1. Dhanvantari—Name of the physician of the gods said to have been produced at the churning of the ocean with a cup of nectar in his hand.

by all diseases and whose death is imminent. This cannot be otherwise. No medicine, no penance, no charity, not the mother, no relatives can protect a man who is afflicted with Kāla (i.e. death). With (the help of) the magnanimous souls, who are equipped with medicines supposed to prolong life and prevent old age, and with penance and muttering of sacred hymns, he would only have intermediate (temporary) peace; he would (certainly) meet with death.

129-151a. He, who dies, is born in the species of insects due to his acts; he sees (i.e. meets with) death as a result of (i.e. which is a) change of the body. That is said to be death. It is not a real (i.e. total) destruction. In this world there is no analogy for the grief which a being has in death when he has entered great darkness (i.e. hell) and when his vitals are being cut off. Being extremely afflicted, he/she cries 'O father, O mother, O husband'. The world is swallowed by death as a frog is by a serpent. He is abandoned by kinsmen and is surrounded by his dear ones. Rolling on a bedstead and heaving deep and hot sighs, he, with his mouth parched, again and again faints. Being in a swoon, he throws his hands and feet here and there. From (i.e. when he is on) the bedstead he desires (to go to) the ground, and from (i.e. when he is on) the ground he again desires (to go to) the bedstead. He is helpless, is ashamed, is smeared with excretion and urine; he asks for water; his throat, lips and palate are dry; thinking about his wealth (as) 'to whom will it belong when I die?', being taken by the messengers of Yama and being dragged by the noose of (the god of) death, he dies, when (the relatives etc.) are watching. His throat makes a sound. Like a caterpillar the soul would enter (i.e. goes to) one after another body. He obtains the next body; he abandons the previous one. For the discriminating people, death is more painful than supplication. The grief in (i.e. due to) death is momentary, while in (i.e. due to) supplication it is unending. Viṣṇu, the lord of the worlds, became a dwarf through supplication. Who is greater than he who does not become mean (through supplication)? I have now understood this as to when one becomes superior to death. One should not repeatedly solicit another (man). Thirst (i.e. desire) is the cause of meanness. There is grief in the beginning, there is also grief in the middle; at the end there is terrible

grief, due to nature (i.e. this is natural). Thus there is a series of griefs for beings. A man should not lament over these griefs for beings, which are present and which have gone by. Due to (even) that (i.e. these griefs) (a man) is not detached from existence. There is a great grief due to excessive eating; then there is grief due to eating less. While eating the throat breaks; (so) wherefrom is there pleasure from eating? Hunger is said to be the greatest disease of all the diseases. It is temporarily alleviated due to the application of soothing medicines. The pang of the disease of hunger is acute, and it cuts off the entire strength (of a man). Overpowered by that a man dies as he would die of other diseases. What delight is there in its relish that lingers on the tip of the tongue? In a moment—in half of that time—it reaches the throat and returns. Thus for those who are tormented by the disease of hunger food is said to be (working) like a medicine. Wise men should not look upon it as actually leading to pleasure. In the case of him also, who, without (doing) any work, lies like a dead body, and whose mind is impelled by ignorance, wherefrom can there be pleasure? Wherefrom can there be happiness in the case of him whose mind is affected in (i.e. while performing) deeds, though he has knowledge? Beings though content, are troubled due to optional (deeds) by exertion in agriculture, trade, service, animal husbandry etc. and by (passing) urine and excretion in the morning, and by hunger and thirst in the noon, and by sleep at night.

151b-163. There is grief in earning money; there is grief in preserving what is earned. There is grief when wealth perishes; there is grief in spending it. Wherefrom (i.e. how) can there be happiness from wealth? As there is fear from death in the case of (i.e. to) men, similarly there is always fear to the wealthy persons from thieves, water, fire, their kinsmen, and even from the king. A wealthy person is everywhere eaten up (i.e. robbed) as flesh is eaten by birds in the sky, by wild beasts on the earth, and by fish in water. Wealth deludes a man in prosperity, keeps him away (from joy) in calamity, is painful when it is earned. (Then) when does it bring happiness? First (consider) a wealthy person; he is (always) sad; then (consider) one who is free from desire for all objects. Between the two, I think the wealthy person is unhappy, and the one, whose mind is detached, is happy. Due

to heat there is suffering in the spring and summer seasons; in the rainy season there is suffering due to (stormy) wind, heat and showers. Thus wherefrom (can one get) happiness? There is suffering in the (so-called) glory of marriage; again there is suffering in pregnancy. There is suffering due to the difficulty in delivery, and also due to the acts like those of excretion etc. (In the same way) there is suffering due to the son suffering from diseases of teeth and eyes. (Then one says:) 'Alas! What shall I do (now)? My cows have perished; my husband has broken down; my wife has run away. These guests, indicating fear, have come to my house. My wife has a young child. Who will do the cooking? What kind of bridegroom will be (obtained) by my daughter at the time of her marriage?' How can there be happiness to householders who are overcome by this anxiety? The knowledge, (good) character, all virtues of a man distressed by the anxiety of the family, perish along with his body, like water put in an unbaked jar. Wherefrom can there be pleasure in (i.e. from) a kingdom due to (i.e. as there is) anxiety of peace and war? There is fear even from the son (to a king); (then) what kind of happiness is there?

164-173. Generally all beings have fear from (members of) their own species, as dogs have fear from one another, as all of them desire to have the same object. There is no king on the earth, who, having abandoned everything, has entered a forest and remained there happy and fearless. The brave son (viz. Paraśurāma) of the sage (viz. Jamadagni) knocked down on the ground the thousand arms of the famous Kārtavīrya in a battle. Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, destroyed the matchless, rising valour of the very magnanimous son of the sage (viz. Jamadagni). The glory of Rāma (i.e. Balarāma) was destroyed, with his splendour, by Jarāsandha. The glory of Jarāsandha was destroyed by Bhīma, and his glory too by (Hanumān) the son of Wind. Hanumān too, being tossed by the Sun, fell on the ground. The glorious Arjuna killed all the demons—the Nivātakavacas—who were proud of their strength. He (too) was vanquished by the cowherds. At times even the sun, full of glowing heat is screened by clouds. A cloud is tossed by wind, and the power of wind is vanquished by the mountains. The mountains are burnt by fire, and that fire is extinguished by water. That water is dried up by

the suns; (and) all those suns, along with water and the three worlds, perish on (i.e. at the end of) Brahmā's day. Brahmā too, at the end of the period of two Parārdhas, is withdrawn along with the gods, by Śiva, the highest lord.

174-198a. Thus, in this worldly existence, there is no best power, excepting the highest soul, the immutable lord of the world. Realising that everything has a superior (object), one should avoid great pride. When the world is like this, who is a god, or who is even a learned man? There is no one (in the world) who is omniscient, or who is a total fool? A man is learned there (i.e. in a particular field) to that extent to which he knows it. By deep thinking, (it is found that) the power (of men) everywhere is similar. Someone has power in some field due to excess of wealth. Gods were vanquished by demons, and they were again (i.e. in their turn) vanquished by gods. Thus the beings in the world are dependent on one another through good fortune, success and defeat. Thus (even) for kings a pair of garments and water and food of the measure of a prastha, a vehicle, a bed and a seat (are enough). All the rest just leads to misery. He can even have a bedstead on the seventh floor; (but) there is the painful glory (of being consecrated by the water) from a thousand pitchers of water. In the early morning there is the sound of the musical instruments along with (that of) the citizens. There is just that pride in (i.e. due to) a kingdom, viz. 'This (musical instrument) is being beaten in my house.' All ornaments are (but) a burden; all anointing is dirt (only); all songs are (just) a prattle; dancing is (nothing but) the movement of a mad person. This (is the fruit) due to the enjoyments (obtained from) a kingdom. On reflection (one would see): 'wherefrom (i.e. how) is happiness (obtained?)'. Kings have anxiety about war (with one another) or due to the desire of conquering one another. Mostly great kings like Nahuṣa have fallen after reaching heaven due to the pride of wealth. Who gets happiness from wealth ? Even in heaven, how can there be happiness when gods have observed the bright glory of other (gods) which remains more prominently in one than in another? When the foundation (of all ill acts) is cut off, men enjoy the fruit of their merit in heaven. Here the very terrible blemish is that no other

act is performed. As a tree, with its roots cut off, falls on the ground after (a few) days, similarly the residents of heaven fall down due to the exhaustion of their religious merit. All of a sudden calamity befalls those who strongly desire happiness through the boats of enjoyment of pleasures etc. There is misery for the gods in heaven. Thus on reflection (it is seen) that even in heaven gods do not have happiness. When the objects of senses are not obtained, there is the exhaustion of the acts that lead to enjoyment in heaven. In the fires of hell there is a great affliction to the beings, due to various terrible objects produced from speech, mind and body. There is a severe cutting with axes; and the chopping off of the bark-garments. There is the fall of leaves, branches and fruits (caused) by terrible wind. There is suffering among the immobile species due to being uprooted by rivers, elephants and by other beings, and also by wild fire, snow and dryness. There is a terrible pain in (i.e. due to) the anger of snakes and serpents. In the world the wicked are killed, and are bound down with fetters. Repeatedly there are sudden birth and death in the case of insects and also (in the case of those) belonging to the class of reptiles. Thus there are many kinds of miseries. The beasts end themselves and are beaten with sticks. They are troubled due to their noses being pierced and are beaten with a whip. They are fettered with canes, wood, goad etc. Service causes affliction to the mind; the young etc. are troubled. Due to separation from their herds, and their eyes being tied (i.e. covered), beasts have thus many kinds of afflictions. Sharks and birds have a great affliction due to rain, cold and heat.

198b-210. Thus there are many kinds of afflictions for bodies. For men there is a great affliction while living in the womb, and also great affliction of (i.e. during) birth. Ignorance is a great affliction of childhood; in adolescence there is (the affliction of) the punishment by a teacher. There is affliction in youth due to lust and attachment, and due to jealousy; and also due to agriculture, trade, service etc., and acts like protection of the cattle. In old age (there is affliction) due to aging and diseases. There is great affliction in (i.e. at the time of) death; still greater (is the affliction) in solicitation. There is a great fear from the king, fire, strokes by clouds (like lightning), thieves

and enemies. There is again a great fear in earning and preserving money and its destruction and spending. Miserliness, jealousy, and arrogance are greatly fearful results of the excess of wealth (i.e. when there is excessive wealth). There is a tendency for doing misdeeds. These are always the afflictions of the wealthy. (There are afflictions like) servitude, usury, slavery, dependence on others, connection with the desirable and undesirable, and many kinds of unions. (There are calamities like) famine, misfortune, folly, poverty, enjoying lower or higher (position), (going) to hell, and being overpowered by the king. There is affliction due to mutual subjugation. There is a great fear from one another; there is a great wrath towards one another; and a king has (to suffer) affliction from (other) kings. Here (i.e. in this world) the objects are transient, (so also) of a human being whose desires are satisfied. (There is affliction) due to the cutting of the vitals of one another, and due to the squeezing of the hands of one another. The greedy ones due to sin (indulge in) consuming one another. Since the mobile and the immobile (beings) beginning with (denizens of) hell and ending with human beings, are afraid of such and other afflictions, therefore a wise man should abandon everything. As when a burden is shifted from one shoulder to another it is regarded as rest, similarly in this world one grief is alleviated by another. The boats of enjoyment always excel one another.

211-225. Misery has settled with gods in the heaven due to the exhaustion of their religious merit. Due to the exhaustion of religious merit there is birth (i.e. a soul is born) in many species. Even in the world of gods there are said to be diseases of various forms. The head of Sacrifice was cut off; and it was rejoined by the Aśvins. Due to that defect the Sacrifice always has (i.e. suffers from) the disease of the head. The Sun has (i.e. suffers from) leprosy and Varuṇa has (i.e. suffers from) dropsy. Pūṣan has defect in his teeth, and Indra has (i.e. suffers from) stiffness of arms. Soma is known to have been suffering from a very severe disease of consumption. Even Dakṣa, the lord of created beings, suffers from acute fever. In every Kalpa even great gods perish. Even Brahmā becomes unstable after a period of two parārdhas. Brahmā again longed for his granddaughter, the daughter of Dakṣa. The lord angrily cursed goddess Jayā,

who knew deep, abstract meditation. The defects of the nature of (i.e. due to) lust and anger remain there, where the two remain. (Thus) all miseries are stable. There is no doubt about it. The fire consumes everything shattered by birth and death. (Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu) murdered a woman, was lustful, and acted as a charioteer in the Pāṇḍava army. Rudra burnt the three cities (of Maya), and destroyed Dakṣa's sacrifice. The birth of Skanda is from the semen from (i.e. discharged during) sports in thousand ways. Thus all the three gods possess the faults like attachment. The lord superior to these is tranquil, perfect and giver of salvation. Thus the entire world lives on the excellence of one (over) another. One should go to (i.e. have) disgust, knowing that (the world) is full of miseries. From disgust there would arise detachment, and knowledge springs from detachment. Through knowledge one would get that highest propitious knowledge (and) salvation. He then is happy with his mind at ease (since he is) freed from all miseries. He who is omniscient, and perfect is called (a) free (soul).

Mātali said :

I have told you all that you had asked about. The discrimination between merit and demerit is due to omniscience. You should go to Indra's heaven at his bidding.

CHAPTER SIXTYSEVEN

Mātali on Three Kinds of Sin

Yayāti said :

1-2. O you charioteer of Indra, due to my good luck I have been able to see you. This gives me immense merit. Even in the mortal world human beings commit a terrible sin. O Mātali, now tell me about the ripening of their actions.

Mātali said :

3-12. Listen, I shall tell (you) the characteristics of a sinful

behaviour. In this world great knowledge is produced when (things) are heard. People condemn the Vedas and censure brāhmaṇic practices. Those who are learned should also know what great sin is. He who causes harm to all the good persons (has committed) a major sin. It would go (i.e. its effect would be nullified only) by expiation. People give up the customs peculiar to their own family and practise those of others. Those who know what should be done (i.e. what is proper) have described this to be a major sin. Reviling one's mother and father, beating one's sisters, and abusing one's father's sister is certainly a sin. The dead ancestors of him, who, when the time for offering a śrāddha has come, proceeds (to offer the śrāddha and) feeds someone else through lust or anger or fear, ignoring his son-in-law living at a distance of five kośas, his daughter's son, his own sister and her son, do not enjoy (the oblations offered by him), nor do the gods enjoy (the offerings made to them). This sin, committed by him, is equal to patricide. When the time for giving gifts has come, and when a brāhmaṇa (-group) has come, he avoids giving gifts to many, and gives them (only) to a few. That a gift is given to one, and no gift is given to another, is also a terrible sin, and is said to destroy (the merit acquired from) gifts.

13-23a. That is not a distinctive mark of a gift which is given (to someone else) ignoring his own brāhmaṇas employed by the patron. O king, a (patron) should well nourish, with all means and good gifts, that brāhmaṇa of a religious conduct who has resorted to him. He should not consider whether he is a foolish or a learned brāhmaṇa. A brāhmaṇa is always to be fed. He should always worship a learned brāhmaṇa endowed with all religious merit, who has come to him, after honouring him with good gifts. There is no doubt that the gifts which he would give to some other brāhmaṇa by ignoring that (learned brāhmaṇa) or the offerings that he would make, would be fruitless. On all auspicious occasions a brāhmaṇa, a kṣatriya, a vaiśya and a śūdra as the fourth should worship a brāhmaṇa that has sought their shelter—whether he is a fool or a learned brāhmaṇa. Listen (I will tell you) the meritorious fruit of it. He obtains the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. O king, what is the reason for which (i.e. there is no reason why) he should not get done what is

possible? If another brāhmaṇa comes at that time when the śrāddha-rite is going on, he should then honour both the brāhmaṇas by giving them food, shelter, tāmbūla and presents. (If he does this) his dead ancestors are pleased. One should always give gifts and make presents to (a brāhmaṇa) who has eaten at a śrāddha. The sin of that performer of a śrāddha who does not give gifts would be equal to that due to the killing of a cow. Therefore, O best king, these two should be honoured with faith. Or if he is poor he should honour one (of the two).

23b-30. Thus men belonging to the three castes such as brāhmaṇa etc. should perform a śrāddha on the day of a great calamity, or when the astronomical division of time called vaidhṛti has come, or on a new-moon day, or a day between two sunrises in the next half. O great king, he should employ priests officiating at sacrifices. In the same way he should always employ brāhmaṇas for offering a śrāddha. A wise man should never employ an unknown brāhmaṇa. He should invite that brāhmaṇa whose family up to the third (previous) generation from him is known and whose conduct is known, O king. He should consider the conduct of a brāhmaṇa whose family is not known. When the śrāddha-offering is to be made, it may not be known whether a brāhmaṇa is pure or foolish, or is one who has mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. A śrāddha-offering ought to be done; so he should invite a brāhmaṇa (for that); O best king, first hospitable reception should be given (to him). If a sinful (host) does otherwise he certainly goes to hell. Therefore a brāhmaṇa should be engaged at a presentation of gifts or a śrāddha on the parvan-days.

31-33. At the time of presentation of gifts or a śrāddha, he should engage a brāhmaṇa after examining him. In his house the dead ancestors do not eat without a brāhmaṇa. They go away after cursing (him who offers the śrāddha) from a śrāddha (performed) without a brāhmaṇa. He (who offers such a śrāddha) is a great sinner even if he resembles Brahmā. O king, he who lives by abandoning the performance (of rites) to the dead ancestors, should be known to be a great sinner to be excommunicated.

34-39. Those who give up auspicious practices relating to Viṣṇu and giving (i.e. bringing) enjoyments, and who condemn

the brāhmaṇic way of conduct should be known as men of increasing sins. Those, who give up auspicious practices (or practices relating to Śiva), who hate the devotees of Śiva, who, the sinners, abuse Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), who always hate Brahmā (or brāhmaṇas), who condemn the (religious) practices, are the greatest sinners. I shall now tell (you) about the religious merit of those who worship the first, venerable, the highest knowledge, the meritorious Bhāgavata and (other Purāṇas like) Viṣṇu, Harivaṁśa, Matsya or Padma. He (i.e. such a person) has actually worshipped god Viṣṇu. Therefore one should worship the knowledge, contained in the Viṣṇu (Purāṇa), (and) dear to Viṣṇu. O king, there is always (kept) a book (i.e. a copy) of the Viṣṇu (Purāṇa). When it is worshipped, Lakṣmī's lord (i.e. Viṣṇu) is worshipped.

40-58. Those who, without worshipping (the Purāṇa containing) knowledge about Hari, sing or write, or without knowing it, present it, or listen to or recite it, or sell it through greed and devotion to bad (i.e. wrong) knowledge, or place it, as they will, at places that are not purified, or one who would declare it explicitly in accordance with (i.e. helping) his welfare, or he who, being capable, commits mistakes after having studied it, or he who being impure explains or listens to it at an impure place (all these condemn knowledge). This, in brief, is said to be the condemnation of knowledge. I (shall now) tell (you) about the sin of him who, the sinful one, desires to learn sacred texts without worshipping his preceptor, who does not render service (to his preceptor and) deliberately disobeys him, (and who) does not approve of the words (of the preceptor), does not respond to him, ignores when (some) work of the preceptor is to be done, (and he, who) abandons his preceptor who is afflicted and weak, or is proceeding to a foreign country or has been humiliated by adversaries or while he is reciting a Purāṇa. Till (the period during which) fourteen Indras have ruled, he would live in (the hell called) Kumbhīpāka. Also one who, of a sinful mind, ignores his preceptor reading the Purāṇa, has (committed) a terrible sin, giving (i.e. taking him to) hell. Also the sin (of him) who condemns his wife, sons and friends is as great as (that of) the condemnation of one's preceptor. One who kills a brāhmaṇa, one who steals gold, one who drinks liquor,

one who violates his teacher's bed (i.e. his teacher's wife)—all these are great sinners; so also the one who joins (i.e. abets) them. He, who very much cuts the vitals especially of a brāhmaṇa through anger, hatred or greed, is declared to be the killer of a brāhmaṇa. O king, he also is the killer of a brāhmaṇa, who, having invited a poor, soliciting brāhmaṇa, says 'no' (i.e. refuses to give any gift) to him. He is declared to be killer of a brāhmaṇa, who, due to the pride of his own knowledge, renders lustreless (i.e. humiliates) a neutral brāhmaṇa in an assembly. He is said to be the killer of a brāhmaṇa, who elevates himself by means of pretended virtues, and who opposes his preceptor. They call him to be the killer of a brāhmaṇa, who creates an obstacle to them, who, with their bodies tormented by hunger and thirst, seek food or meal. He also is said to be the killer of a brāhmaṇa, who, a wicked one, is intent upon finding out the weak points of all the people, who causes torture and is cruel. They call him the killer of a brāhmaṇa, who would snatch back the land, though destroyed, in course of time, which was formerly given to a deity, a brāhmaṇa, or cows. That sin of taking away the wealth of a brāhmaṇa obtained as (i.e. which was put as) a deposit should be known to be as great as that of killing a brāhmaṇa.

59-66. He who gives up making an oblation to the fire in the rite of the five daily sacrifices; he who stands as a false witness against his mother, father and preceptor (is, a great sinner). (This sin and) eating what is not dear to Śiva's devotees and what ought not to be eaten, also killing innocent beasts in the forest, and setting fire to a cow-pen, a city or a village—all these are terrible sins equal to the sin (involved) in drinking liquor. Taking away all the possessions of a poor man, kidnapping another's wife, snatching elephants and horses, or cows, land, silver, garments, herbs and minerals, sandal, aloe wood, camphor, musk, woven silk, or taking away the deposits (made) by others is said to be like the stealing of gold. Not giving (in marriage) his marriageable daughter to a befitting groom, having an illicit connection with the wife of his son or friend or his own sister, fearful violating of a maiden, attachment to a śūdra-woman, cohabiting with a woman of the same caste is said to be like violating one's teacher's bed (i.e. teacher's wife). Those sins, which have been enumerated as sins, resemble major sins.

67-70. When a brāhmaṇa having promised money to a brāhmaṇa does not give it and forgets about it—that is equal to a minor sin. (Some other minor sins are:) snatching the wealth of a brāhmaṇa, crossing one's limit, too much pride, too much anger, hypocrisy, ingratitude, lust for someone other (than one's own wife), miserliness, wickedness, jealousy, sexual intercourse with the wife of someone else, violating a chaste maiden. The elder brother before whom his younger brother gets married, the younger brother married before the elder brother, the girl whom he marries (are sinners). (It is a sin) to offer a girl to them, or to act as a priest at sacrifices performed by them. (Other sins are:)

71-80. Abandoning one's son, friend, wife, also one's master when he is reduced to poverty, and one's wife and good people and ascetics; killing a cow, a kṣatriya, a vaiśya, a woman or a śūdra; destruction of a Śiva-temple, trees, and lovely groves. (He) who causes even a small damage to hermitages or harms the group of servents there, or the beasts (living there), or the grains or wild crops, or steals ploughs, corn or beasts, or acts as a priest at a sacrifice of those who do not deserve to perform a sacrifice (is a sinner). The sale of (the merit due to) a sacrifice, of a grove or a lake, one's wife and children, of (the merit of) pilgrimage, fasts, vows and (other) pious acts (is a sin). (They are sinners) who live by the wealth of women and he who lives for a large part on the affluence of a woman (are sinners). O prince, he who would sell off his own faith, and he who would praise unrighteousness, he who mentions the faults of others, he who observes the weak points of others, he who longs for other's wealth, he who (passionately) gazes on another's wife—all these should be looked upon as resembling the killers of cows. (He is a sinner) who condemns all sacred texts, who snatches a cow, who sells the beasts, who tells lies or listens to the lies (uttered) by others; (he is a sinner) who plots against his master, or preceptor, who is deceitful, who is fickle or wicked. (He is a sinner) who eats (alone) leaving his hungry wife, sons, friends, children, old people, weak and afflicted persons, and also servants, guests and relatives.

81-87a. Those who eat savory (food) and do not give it to him who desires it should be known as ones cooking separately

(for themselves only) and such a person is condemned by the teachers of the Vedas. Those who take up restrictions and (later), with their organs of sense not conquered, give them up, and also those who have given up the life of a recluse, and those who are in the company of drunkards, and those who do not protect a cow that is afflicted with consumption or with thirst and hunger, are the killers of cows and are said to be hellish beings. Those who are engrossed (in committing) all (kinds of) sins, those who destroy the (grazing) field of the quadrupeds, or he who would beat (i.e. beats) saints, brāhmaṇas, preceptors or a cow, and also those who beat a faultless woman settled in a good position (i.e. behaving properly), and he, who, with his entire body bound with laziness, sleeps again and again; those who do not feed the weak or who do not look for the missing ones, or who trouble (the bullocks) by (putting) large burdens on them or drive them (even) when they are wounded are involved in (i.e. have committed) all (kinds of) sins. So also those who eat together (i.e. from the same plate).

87b-95a. Those men, who do not protect a cow with her limbs broken, and afflicted with wounds and (other) diseases and with hunger, are said to be hellish beings. Those men, who, the most sinful ones, strike the scrotum of bulls (i.e. castrate them), and also who harm cow's calves are beings living in a great (i.e. very painful) hell. Those (men) also, who do not honour a guest who has come to them with hope, and who is oppressed with hunger and exertion, go to hell. Those fools who do not show pity for a helpless, or maimed, or poor or young, or old or very much afflicted person, go to the ocean of (i.e. in the form of) hell. One who keeps goats, one who keeps buffaloes, one who is the husband of a śūdra or a barren woman, or a śūdra behaving like (i.e. following the profession of) a brāhmaṇa or a kṣatriya, also architects, artisans, physicians and devalakas,[1] and those who make their servants work hard, go to hell. He, who, having transgressed what is prescribed, would charge arbitrarily (more) tax, also he who would inflict punishment without a (proper) cause, would be roasted in hells. That king

1. Devalaka—A low brāhmaṇa who subsists upon the offerings made to an idol.

whose subjects are harassed by officials receiving bribes, by thieves in his kingdom, is roasted in hells.

95b-103a. There is no doubt that those brāhmaṇas who accept (gifts) from a king of a bad conduct also go to fearful hells. The king has (committed) that sin which is (committed) by men cohabiting with others' wives or by thieves. Being favoured by a king who does not protect, is fearful. That king, who, without thinking (properly), behaves with a person, who is not a thief, as (he would behave) with a thief, or who behaves with a thief, as he would behave with one who is not a thief, would also go to hell. Men (go to hell, who) through greed, snatch such objects as ghee, oil, food, drink, honey, flesh, wine or (any other) spirituous liquor, jaggery, sugarcane, vegetables, curd, roots and fruits, grass, wood, flowers, leaves, vessels of bell-metal, shoes, umbrella, bracelet, palanquin, soft seat, copper, lead, tin, bell-metal, or conch etc. that has come up from water, musical instrument like a flute, domestic utensils, (garments made of) wool, cotton or silken garments, objects belonging to the place of assembly or temples, or cotton or fine garments. He, who would snatch these and other objects, even in a small quantity, would quickly go to hell.

103b-114. There is no doubt that a man who snatches other's possession even of the measure of a mustard (i.e. even the smallest possession), goes to hell. There is no doubt that a man who takes away a small or a big object of another person, loved by the latter, goes to hell. Due to these and other sins, a man, immediately after his departure, would get (back) his former form or his body to be struck (by Yama's servants). The embodied ones go to Yama's world by the order of Yama. They are very much pained when they are being taken by the very fierce messengers of Yama. Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) is said to be the punisher, due to various sorts of severe corporcal punishments meted out by him, to gods, lower animals and men who are governed by unrighteousness. A preceptor is the punisher through expiations (i.e. who makes them undergo expiations) of those who are endowed with decent behaviour but have soiled themselves through an error. Yama is not seen by them (i.e. their cases are not decided by Yama). A king is said to be the ruler of those who violate others' wives, who are thieves and who do

their transactions unjustly; and Dharmarāja is the ruler of those who have hidden themselves. Therefore, one should undergo expiation for the sin that one has committed. There is no destruction of (the acts whose fruits) one has not enjoyed (or suffered) even after crores of kalpas. For him, who himself commits a sin, or causes (someone else) to commit it, or approves of it, by means of body, mind or speech, the fruit is going down (to hell). In this way, the three kinds of sin have been explained (by me) in brief. Different courses (followed by) men committing sins are narrated. O king, I have told you in minute detail, the fruit of righteousness. O best of men, tell me, what else I should explain to you. I have told you about the fruit of unrighteousness. I (shall) tell you about the fruit of righteousness also.

115. Thus Mātali spoke to the king loved by all. The magnanimous one thus spoke on the topic of righteousness.

CHAPTER SIXTYEIGHT

The Fruit of Righteous Deeds

Yayāti said :

1. O charioteer, O lord, I have heard everything about the fruit of unrighteousness. Tell me also about the fruit of righteousness. I have a curiosity to hear it.

Mātali said :

2-12. These four kinds of all the embodied ones, being helpless, go to Yama's world which causes fear and which is terrible, due to their sins. All beings, that remain in the womb, that are born, and children, young men, middle-aged men, old men, men, women and eunuchs have to go (to Yama's world). There the auspicious or inauspicious fruit (of the deeds) of human beings is decided by all like impartial and omniscient Citragupta and others. There are no beings (in the world) that do not go to Yama's abode. (The fruit of) the deed done (by a

being) has to be enjoyed as decided by them. Those men, who do auspicious deeds, who have soft hearts, who are endowed with pity, go to Yama's abode along a pleasing path. A man who would give (i.e. who gives) shoes, wood or sandals to brāhmaṇas, happily goes to Yama's abode in a great aeroplane. By giving umbrellas (as gifts to brāhmaṇa) human beings go (to Yama's abode). By giving a palanquin (as a gift to a brāhmaṇa) one would happily go (to Yama's abode) along a path in the sky. Those who give garments (as gifts to brāhmaṇas), go, wearing divine garments (to Yama's abode). By giving a palanquin (as a gift to a brāhmaṇa) one would happily go (to Yama's abode) in an aeroplane. By giving a comfortable seat (to a brāhmaṇa) (human beings) happily go to Yama's abode. One who has constructed groves would go happily (enjoying) very cool shadows. Those who give gardens (with trees full of) flowers go to Yama's abode in the Puṣpaka aeroplane. He, who builds a temple, or a hermitage for ascetics, or pavilions for the helpless, playfully goes, due to (having constructed) best dwellings (to Yama's abode). So also he, who worships deities, fire, preceptors, brāhmaṇas, and his father and mother, (playfully goes to Yama's abode).

13-17. All that, even though little, which is given with faith to helpless, virtuous brāhmaṇas obtains (i.e. secures for him) all the desired objects. The saints say that in the world gifts (should be given) at a śrāddha. It should be realized that whatever—even of the measure of that which remains on the tip of a hair—is given with faith (gives good fruit); I always rely upon the four recipients (at a śrāddha). Therefore (if) one always has faith, the fruit of faith would be (obtained) by him. O king, he, who gives dwellings to the virtuous (but) helpless brāhmaṇas, goes to the abode of the grandsire, which satisfies all his desires. O king, he who has given with faith, (something even) of the size of a cowrie to a brāhmaṇa, would be a divine guest, enhancing the glory of gods. Therefore, those, who have faith, should give (i.e. human beings should give with faith). There is certainly (obtained) the fruit of that.

CHAPTER SIXTYNINE

Righteous Acts Enjoined by Śiva (Śivadharmas)

Mātali said :

1-4. Acts of righteousness have been told by Śiva (in) the excellent scriptures of the Śiva cult. Due to the difference in the manner of performance of acts they should be known to be many. The ancient acts as (told) by Śiva are free from blemishes like harming (others), are without suffering and exertion, are beneficial to all beings, are pure, involve little effort and give great fruit. They have many branches, but resort to (i.e. are supported by) the root (in the form) of Śiva. They have good flowers like knowledge and meditation. Since they sustain Śiva and are supported by the sayings of Śiva, they that help (human beings) to cross the ocean of the worldly existence, are known to be acts (liked) by Śiva.

5. Thus the ten, viz. harmlessness, forbearance, truth, sense of shame, faith, control of senses, charity, sacrifice, penance and gifts, are the means of (acquiring) righteousness.

6. The acts which are laid down by Śiva, and which have obtained identity with Śiva, when performed singly or collectively result in one course only.

7-11a. As the earth is said to be a common place for all beings, in the same way the city of Śiva is (said be a common place) for all the devotees of Śiva. As here (i.e. on the earth) enjoyments for all beings are said to be abundant, in the same way they are said to be many in Śiva's city, due to the preeminence of various (kinds) of religious merit. As even the good or bad fruit (of their acts) is enjoyed by all human beings, the fruit of the acts (enjoined) by Śiva is religious merit. One gets excellent, good enjoyments in Śiva's city, especially according to his faith, in accordance with his religious merit. He gets an (excellent) place, his undisturbed enjoyments are comparable to final beatitude.

11b-13. Therefore, to win great enjoyments one should do great meritorious acts. There would be (i.e. he would have) supremacy (i.e. control) over his own enjoyments, which alone is

honoured by best gods as superior to everything. Some men engrossed in the pursuit of knowledge become free there only. Others intent on enjoying pleasures again come back to the mundane existence.

14. Therefore, he who desires salvation should give up attachment to enjoyments. He, being detached, and with his mind and heart tranquil, would obtain the knowledge of Śiva.

15-17a. To them also, who have set their heart on the lord (i.e. Śiva), and who perform sacrifices through devotion to him, the lord gives positions according to their nature. To them also who, with their sins destroyed, worship Rudra (even) once, the lord gives enjoyments in the worlds of goblins. All beings die (as a result of being) tormented by the burden of grief.

17b-22a. He who gives food is said to be the giver of religious merit, the giver of life and the giver of everything. Therefore, by giving food, one would get the fruit of giving everything. He who gives food (would obtain) all the gems, enjoyments, women and vehicles that there are in the three worlds, and would get the entire fruit (of giving food) here (i.e. in this world) and in the next world. There is no doubt that half of the collection of the (deeds of) religious merit which one who is nourished by the food and drink of a giver has, goes to the giver of the food, and half to the one (i.e. the receiver of the food and drink) doing the meritorious acts. The body is a great means of piety, material welfare and salvation. It is maintained by means of food and drink. Therefore it is the means of (obtaining) everything. Food is actually the creator, it is Viṣṇu himself, Śiva himself. Therefore, a gift like that of food was never there, nor will ever be there.

22b-24a. Water is said to be the life of all the three worlds. Water is purifying, divine, pure and is the elixir for all. Especially in the world of the departed spirits these eight gifts are commended: food, drink, horse, cow, garment, bed, thread and seat.

24b-26a. Since due to (these) special gifts a man happily goes to the city of Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama), therefore one should perform acts of charity. O prince, those again who do cruel deeds and are bereft of (i.e. have not given) gifts, experience terrible grief in hell.

26b-33a. Similarly the givers of gifts enjoy pleasures (in heaven). Happiness would be (coming) to them whose minds

are engrossed in doing the deeds enjoined on them. That city is full of innumerable, excellent, divine aeroplanes, fulfilling all desires, and serving beings. That is called Rudra's heaven; it is bright like the lustre of a thousand moons, or lustrous like the sun. It is endowed with all excellences. The city is said to belong to all Śiva-devotees, and also to the mobile and the immobile who die in the place sacred to Rudra. Even he who worships Śiva even for a day, goes to Śiva's place. What to speak of him who worships him many times! The followers and devotees of Viṣṇu, intent on meditating on Viṣṇu, also go to Vaikuṇṭha in the vicinity of the god who holds the disc. He, the righteous-minded one, who talks about (i.e. praises) Brahmā, goes to Brahmā's world. The doer of acts of religious merit goes to a holy world.

33b-39. Therefore, one, who has knowledge and a devoted mind, should oneself create in one's heart devotion for the lord (i.e. Śiva) or for Viṣṇu, O great king. With full consideration and taking into account the weak point of (one's) disposition, one would, in this way, through the grace of Viṣṇu, and in accordance with one's deeds, obtain a position suitable to one's disposition. Thus is said to be the great and excellent city of Śiva; it is said to be returning the human beings, intent on performing their deeds, to the world. Above the city of Śiva excellent heaven of Viṣṇu should be known (to exist). All men intent upon meditating on Viṣṇu, go (to it). Brāhmaṇas, best men of excellent character go to Brahmā's heaven. All the sacrificers, knowing the first principle, go to that city. Similarly, kṣatriyas who fight, go to Indra's heaven; and others who perform acts of religious merit, go to meritorious worlds.

CHAPTER SEVENTY

Sinners in Hell

Mātali said :

1. I shall (now) tell (you) about the very poignant and very terrible torture caused by Yama (which) all the cruel, sinful killers of brāhmaṇas experience.

2-10. Sometimes the sinful ones are roasted with the fire of dry cow-dung; sometimes they are eaten up by fierce lions, wolves, tigers, gad-flies and worms. Sometimes (they are eaten up) by great leeches, or by huge cobras, and by terrible flies or sometimes by serpents with strong poison. (Sometimes they are eaten up) by great intoxicated and torturing herds of elephants, (or) by great bulls with sharp horns, scratching the path, and by buffaloes with big horns harming the bodies of the wicked, and by fierce female goblins and by terrible demons. Mounted on a great balance and being tormented by very terrible diseases and being burnt in a wild fire, they go (to Yama). They are very speedily shaken by very violent wind, and are shattered all round by the shower of great (slabs of) stone, and by the terrible falls of meteors having a sound like that of thunderbolt. Being struck by the shower of burning charcoal they go (to Yama). Being filled (i.e. covered) with a great shower of dust, they go to Yama. Men who are sinful experience terrible pain. Thus, the most sinful ones, who commit sins, experience, due to their particular sin, hell, full of many tortures.

11. I have thus explained to you all the difference between merit and demerit. What other excellent branch of religious knowledge shall I explain to you?

CHAPTER SEVENTYONE

Identity of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva

Yayāti said :

1-2. The faith of me, to whom you have excellently explained everything about merit and demerit, has been all the more stimulated by it. Tell me the number said to be that of the gods staying in the (various) worlds (i.e. tell me about their position in the various worlds), O Mātali, and also (tell me that) by whose contact with religious merit and by whom it (i.e. that position) is reached.

Mātali said :

3-9. I shall explain to you the position of gods' worlds endowed with (obtained by?) deep abstract meditation (*yoga-yuktam*), and attained by penance, and giving pleasures and enjoyments. I shall (also) separately explain to you the capacity of merit; and also (describe) in (proper) sequence the nature of the worlds above. There the earthly power of the goblins is eight times. Therefore the power of the men who have recently gone (to Yama's world) is said to be equal to that. That of the demons is sixteen-fold, and like that is that of the kings. Thus whatever is left of the lustre of the family is complete. Gandharvas have (power) from the wind; that of the Yakṣas is said to be full. That of Indra is (derived from) the five elements, and it is forty times great. That of Soma is mental and divine, and that of the lord of the universe is (derived from) the five elements. That of the lords of the created beings has the properties of the moon and has egoism as an additional quality. That of Brahmā is sixtyfour-fold and the power of knowledge is excellent. The pre-eminent ritual of Viṣṇu is the power of Brahmā's position.

10-18a. In the divine city of Śiva there is affluence capable of satisfying all desires. The infinite supremacy of Śiva is great and self-eminent. It is without beginning, middle or end; its true characteristic is pure; it illumines everything; it is subtle; it has no match; it is higher than the highest; it is quite full, has the garb of the world; it abandons the noose for the souls. A man enjoys the pleasure belonging to the place which he has reached; and due to the grace of the lord, the aeroplane would be in accordance with it; various forms of the stars are seen; there are crores of these; to the meritorious twentyeight become bright (i.e. manifest). Those, who at times salute the lord, through association, curiosity or greed obtain that aeroplane. He who, through recital of (the lord's) name occasionally salutes Śiva, does not perish. These are thus the ways of rites pertaining to Śiva. Even through internal act (i.e. mentally) men (may salute the lord) through devotion for him. Those men who occasionally remember Śiva, would get incomparable happiness; what to say of those who are intensely devoted to him?

18b-26. With their minds gone to (i.e. set upon) him

through meditation, men reflected on Viṣṇu. They go to the highest place. That is the highest position of Viṣṇu. O king, the form of Śiva and that of Viṣṇu are identical. There is no difference between the glorious two, who are of the same form. (One can) salute Śiva of the form of Viṣṇu, and Viṣṇu of the form of Śiva. Viṣṇu is the heart of Śiva, and Śiva is the heart of Viṣṇu. The three gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are (just) one form. There is no distinction among the three, only the qualitative differences are narrated. O king, you are a devotee of Śiva, so also you are a follower of Viṣṇu. Therefore the three gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara are pleased with you. O you of a good vow, they—the givers of boons—are very much pleased with your deeds. O you, who remove the pride (of your enemies), I have come in your vicinity (i.e. to you) by the order of Indra. (First) go to the position of Indra, then to that of Brahmā, and then to that of Śiva. Go to Viṣṇu's position, free from tormentation and destruction. (Go to these places) in divine aeroplane, going everywhere. Being of a divine form, and getting into the Puṣpaka, moving comfortably, enjoy divine, charming pleasures.

Sukarman said :

27. Mātali, having thus spoken to king Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, who knew the essence of religion, O best brāhmaṇa, became silent.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTWO

Yayāti's Reluctance to Part with the Body

Pippala said :

1-2. O you highly intelligent one, tell me in detail, what the king, the son of Nahuṣa said on hearing the words of Mātali. O wise one, this is an all-meritorious story which destroys sins. I desire to hear it. I am not at all being satisfied.

Sukarman said :

3. Yayāti, the best king, the greatest among those who practised piety, said to the messenger Mātali, Indra's charioteer, who had come (to him):

Yayāti said :

4-7. O messenger, I shall not abandon my body. There is no doubt that I shall not go to heaven without (this) earthly body. Though you have thus narrated the great blemishes of the body, and though you have already described all its merits and demerits, yet I shall not abandon my body, and I shall not come to heaven. Going to Indra, the lord of gods, tell him like this: "O you very intelligent one, a man does not obtain perfection by means of the soul alone or with only the body. This is the mundane (existence).

8-14a. Body cannot remain without life (i.e. the soul), nor can the soul remain without the body. O Indra, they have friendship (i.e. they are mutual friends). I shall not destroy the body due to whose grace the soul obtains exclusive happiness and other pleasures according to his mind (i.e. as he desires)." O messenger of gods, knowing the enjoyments in heaven to be like this, I do not want them. O Mātali, due to blemishes painful and very sinful disease are (contracted). Old age is due to a defect. Observe my body endowed with religious merit and sixteen years old. Since my birth my body has gone to (i.e. lasted for) half a century. Still there is freshness of my body (still my body is fresh). (This) period (i.e. life) of me has passed excellently. As the body of a youth of sixteen years looks handsome, in the same way my body endowed with power and valour looks.

14b-16. I do not have fatigue, I do not have failure, I do not have exhaustion; nor do I have (i.e. suffer from) diseases or old age. O Mātali, my body also thrives with enthusiasm for piety; for, in olden days, the medicine—the divine, great medicine, the elixir, all full of nectar is prepared for the destruction of sins and diseases. My body is purified by that; (therefore) it is free from blemishes.

17-24. O messenger, I am always doing (i.e. taking) the elixir, viz. the meditation on Viṣṇu and the excellent utterance

of his name. By that all my diseases and blemishes like sins have been destroyed, when, in this worldly existence, there is the great (i.e. effective) medicine like the name of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). Human beings suffering from sinful disease die (since) the very foolish ones do not drink the elixir of the name of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). O Mātali, my body is healthy due to that meditation, knowledge, worship, truthfulness, and religious merit caused by giving gifts. Diseases and sufferings torment him whose accomplishment is sins. There is no doubt that beings die here (i.e. in this world) due to sufferings. Therefore men, resorting to merit and truthfulness, should perform religious acts. The body is made of the five elements, and is worn out by the veins and joints. As an ornament is (fashioned) by a goldsmith with borax, so a human being is put together. In it always shine a great fire, a moving humour of the body, which is (made) of a hundred pieces. O brāhmaṇa, he who joins (these pieces) is intelligent.

25-30a. O Pippala,. all these pieces (of the body) of the nature of the five elements and worn out by a hundred joints, are held together by the divine name of Viṣṇu and good fortune. The body is like a metal. The body becomes new by offering worship to Viṣṇu, meditation and restraint, truthfulness and charity. O Mātali, listen, the blemishes of the body—the diseases—perish. There is external and internal purity, and there is no foul smell. Then, O charioteer, due to the grace of the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), (the body) would be pure. I shall not go to heaven. I shall fashion heaven here (only). I shall make the earth of the nature of heaven by means of (my) penance, devotion, my own religious acts, and the grace of the disc-holder. Realising this, you (may please) go and tell Indra.

Sukarman said :

30b-32. Then, that charioteer, having heard the words of the king and having congratulated him with blessing, took the king's leave, and went (to heaven). He told everything to the noble Indra. Indra, having heard (the message) of the magnanimous Yayāti, thought as to how to bring Yayāti to heaven.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTHREE

The Efficacy of Viṣṇu's Name

Pippala said :

1. When that illustrious messenger had left (for heaven), what did that religious-minded Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, do?

Sukarman said :

2-7. When that messenger of the best god (i.e. Indra) had left, the son of king (Nahuṣa) thought (to himself). Having immediately called his excellent messengers, he instructed them with words of propriety: "The excellent messengers should go to an excellent city, to all regions and islands in the world. They should carry out my words (i.e. order) which is full of virtue. May people go along the good path of Viṣṇu, by means of devotional and very meritorious (acts), meditations resembling nectar, knowledge, sacrifices and austerities. Abandoning the worldly objects of sense, may they worship Viṣṇu alone with sacrifices and gifts. May they see only the enemy of the demons and of the nature of the soul everywhere—at dry places, wet and immobile places, in the clouds, on the earth, in mobile and immobile (objects) and even in their own bodies. With hospitality and rites in honour of their dead ancestors may they offer gifts dedicating them to that god. May they offer sacrifices to that best god Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu); you (i.e. they) will soon be free from blemishes. That shameless man who through greed or folly would not obey these words of me right now, would certainly be punished like a vile thief."

8. Having heard the words of the king, the messengers, with their minds delighted, (moved over) the entire earth, and made the order given by the king known among all the subjects.

9-16. "O mortals, brāhmaṇas and others, the king has brought on the earth the very meritorious nectar. Drink that meritorious (nectar) called Vaiṣṇava, free from blemishes and of a desirable effect. The king has already brought (to the earth) the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name Śrī Keśava, which removes suffering, which is desirable, which is

of the form of joy, and which itself is the highest truth. May people drink it. The good king has already brought (to the earth) the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name of him, holding a sword in his hand, called Madhusūdana, the abode of Lakṣmī, and the meritorious lord of the gods. May people drink it. The good king has already brought (to the earth) nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name Śrī Padmanābha, of lotus-like eyes, the prop of the worlds, and the great lord. May the people drink it. The good king has already brought the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of (Viṣṇu's) name, which destroys sins, which removes diseases, which gives joy, which destroys the dānavas and daityas (i.e. the demons). May people drink it. The good king has already brought the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name Viṣṇu of the nature of sacrificial requisites, with a disc in his hand, the mine of religious merit, and of infinite happiness. May people drink it. The king has already brought the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name of Viṣṇu, the abode of everything, pure, the end (of everything), named Rāma, the pleasing, and the enemy of Mura. May people drink it. The good king has already brought the nectar, removing blemishes, in the form of the name of (Viṣṇu), of the form of the sun, the destroyer of darkness, the destroyer of the bond of the lotuses in the form of minds. May people drink it.

17. He, the noble one, Viṣṇu's devotee, having restrained himself, studies (i.e. recites) this truthful, very meritorious nectar of (Viṣṇu's) name, goes to salvation. There is no (other) agent (than it)."

CHAPTER SEVENTYFOUR

Popularity of Viṣṇu Cult during Yayāti's Rule

Sukarman said :

1-2. All the messengers said (i.e. proclaimed) in the islands, regions and cities: "O people, listen to the command of the king. With all their glory may they worship Viṣṇu. May people with

(devoted) minds desiring merit, reflect on Viṣṇu, by means of many gifts, sacrifices, austerities, and sacrificial rites." Such is the order of that king.

3-5. The people heard all these meritorious (words) thus well-proclaimed on the earth (by the messengers). Since then only the human beings sacrificed (in honour of) Viṣṇu, reflected on him, sang (in praise of) him, and muttered (prayers to him). All human beings, giving up the blemishes due to their bodies, minds and speech, by means of vows, fasts, restraints and gifts, and with their hearts gone to (i.e. set upon) him, worship that Śrī Keśava, Śrī Vāsudeva, the abode of Lakṣmī, and the habitation of the worlds, with well-recited, very meritorious and nectar-like hymns taught by the Vedas and with eulogies.

6-11. Thus prevails the order of that king on the globe. All those people are victorious due to their devotion to Viṣṇu. Those who are well-versed in knowledge, and who meditate and reflect on him and who are intent on worshipping him, adore Viṣṇu with (i.e. by reciting his) names and their deeds. As long as the globe lasts and the sun shines all human beings were (i.e. would continue to be) the followers of Bhagavān (Viṣṇu). Then the human beings, due to the power of meditation on Viṣṇu, due to his worship and (recital of) his eulogy and (his) names, became free from mental agonies and physical diseases. O brāhmaṇa, due to the grace of the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) all the devotees of Viṣṇu became free from grief, became meritorious and had penance as their wealth. They were free from diseases, were without blemishes or wrath; they were endowed with all (kinds of) splendour, and free from all maladies.

12-27. Due to the grace of that god, all men at that time became immortal, ageless and all were endowed with wealth and grains. The mortals were adorned with sons and grandsons by the favour of Viṣṇu. O you noble one, in the (regions near) the doors of their houses only there always were meritorious desire-yielding trees, which yielded the fruits of all their desires, and also all-desire-yielding cows, which satisfied all desires. By the favour of Viṣṇu only all men became immortal, were adorned with sons and grandsons and were free from all blemishes. They were endowed with good fortune and with merit and auspiciousness. They were very meritorious, were endowed with charity and

were intent on knowledge and meditation. When that king Yayāti, who knew what was right, was ruling, there was no famine, no disease, and no premature death among human beings. All men were the devotees of Viṣṇu, all were intent upon (observing) the vow of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. They meditated on him, were devoted to him, and had their hearts set on him. O best brāhmaṇa, their divine and auspicious houses were furnished with white banners and with conches, and had their flags marked with maces and were marked with discs. The houses marked with lotuses and with the walls well-painted with good pictures resembled divine cars. O best ones, everywhere—near the doors of the houses and at holy places there were divine thickets of trees and auspicious grassy spots. O best brāhmaṇa, due to Tulasī and temples of Viṣṇu the auspicious and divine houses of (human) beings always shone. Everywhere meritorious devotion to Viṣṇu was seen to a great extent. O friend, O best brāhmaṇa, there on the earth the sounds of conches due to sounds (produced) by mutual crashing and destroying sin were heard. O best brāhmaṇa, through devotion for Viṣṇu women had drawn (the pictures of) conches, svastikas, lotuses on the doors of houses; and with music, songs, good words, regulated rise or fall of sounds through the musical scale people intent upon the meditation of Viṣṇu sing (in praise of) Viṣṇu.

28-29. They talk affectionately about Hari, Murāri, others about Keśava, Ajita, Mādhava,. They mutter the names of Viṣṇu, the refuge, (like) the lotus-eyed Govinda, the lord of Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī), Kṛṣṇa and Rāma, and worship with muttering (his names). Those great devotees of Viṣṇu, engaged in meditation on him salute him by fully prostrating themselves before him.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFIVE

Yayāti's Subjects became Deathless by the Grace of Viṣṇu

Sukarman said :

1-6. All men, children, old people, unmarried girls always uttered names (i.e. recited the various names of Viṣṇu like) Viṣṇu,

Kṛṣṇa, Hari, Rāma, Mukunda, Madhusūdana, Nārāyaṇa of the form of Viṣṇu, Narasiṁha, Acyuta, Keśava, Padmanābha, Vāsudeva, Vāmana, Varāha, Kamaṭha, Matsya, Hṛṣīkeśa, Surādhipa, Viśveśa, Viśvarūpa, Ananta, Anagha, Śuci, Puruṣa, Puṣkarākṣa, Śrīdhara, Śrīpati, Hari, Śrīnivāsa, Pītavāsa (i.e. clad in a yellow garment), Mādhava, Mokṣada (i.e. giver of salvation) and Prabhu. Women, engaged in domestic work always profusely sang (i.e. recited the names of) Hari, Mādhava, (so also when they were seated) on a seat, (when they were lying) in bed, (while they were going) in a vehicle and in meditation. Similarly children (while) playing saluted Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu).

7-16. Day and night they uttered the very sweet name of Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, everywhere the utterance (of the name) of Viṣṇu was heard. Human beings lived on the earth (only) through the power of Viṣṇu. Discs (of Viṣṇu) shone as the (reflections of the) discs of the sun shine on the tops of the pitchers of palaces and temples. That condition which was seen in Vaikuṇṭha was seen on the earth. That noble king, Nahuṣa's son Yayāti, performed (acts of) merit, and made the earth resemble Viṣṇu's heaven. The appearance of both the worlds (being similar) the earth had become one (with Viṣṇu's heaven). No difference between the earth and Viṣṇu's heaven was noticed. As the devotees of Viṣṇu uttered the names of Viṣṇu in Vaikuṇṭha, like that (i.e. in the same way) men uttered Viṣṇu's names on the earth. O brāhmaṇa, identity between the two worlds was noticed. There was no fear from old age and diseases. People were free from death. On the earth greater grandeur of charity and enjoyment was seen. O best one, men happily enjoyed greater pleasure of (i.e. from) sons and grandsons. All the human beings—Viṣṇu's devotees—were always free from all diseases due to the gift of Viṣṇu's grace (which they received) and his instruction.

17-20a. The king brought about the grandeur of heaven on the earth. O best king, the years were of the extent of twentyfive (i.e. were very long). All men were free from diseases and were intent upon (getting) knowledge and meditation. All men were solely absorbed in (performing) sacrifices, and (giving) gifts, and all were kind. They were engaged in obliging (others);

those meritorious men, repositories of fame, were blessed. O brāhmaṇa, all men were solely devoted to religion and were solely absorbed in meditation. Instructed by that king, they became devoted to Viṣṇu on the earth.

Viṣṇu said :

20b-28a. O best king, listen to the account of that king. That son of Nahuṣa was always absorbed in all (deeds of) merit and a devotee of Viṣṇu. In this way he passed a lakh of years on the earth. His body endowed with maturity, appeared to be twenty-five years old by means of his (handsome) form. Those men (i.e. his subjects), having resorted to (i.e. living on) the earth, do not at all go to Yama. O king, all people free from attachment and hatred, bereft of the noose of suffering, happy on account of the merit (obtained) by (giving) gifts, and solely devoted to all religious deeds, always expanded (i.e. their number grew) with regard to progeny also. As the dūrvā (grass) and the bunyan trees spread on the earth, in the same way all those men expanded (i.e. grew in number) by means of sons and grandsons. Those men, free from the blemish of death, lived long. All (those) men with strong bodies, free from old age and diseases and (therefore) happy, were seen to be twentyfive years old (i.e. very young) on the earth. All were devoted to good conduct and absorbed in meditation on Viṣṇu.

28b-34a. Thus all mortals—all human beings—had become solely devoted to (giving) gifts and enjoyments, due to the grace of that disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu). O best man, no human being was heard to be dead. They did not see (i.e. meet with) grief, nor did they go to (i.e. have) blemish. O best of men, due to the favour of that disc-holder, the nature of the world had become just like that which was the nature of heaven. The messengers of Yama, beaten by Viṣṇu's messengers, disappeared. All of them, weeping with one another, went to Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). The messengers told (Yama) all that the king (i.e. Yayāti) had done. (They said to Yama): "O Sun's son, due to (giving of) gifts and enjoyment the earth has become deathless. O god, Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, did it. That meritorious devotee of Viṣṇu, demonstrated the nature of heaven (on the earth)."

34b-35. At that time Dharmarāja heard all this. Then Dharmarāja, having heard in detail the activities of the king, considered the entire fact.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSIX

Dharmarāja Rendered Jobless

Sukarman said :

1-4a. The son of the Sun (i.e. Yama) went with all his messengers to heaven to see there Indra, surrounded by groups of gods. Then that king of gods (i.e. Indra) saw Dharmarāja in his assembly. Quickly getting up he presented excellent respectful offering to him, and asked him (the reason for) his arrival (saying:) "Tell me (why you have come)." Hearing the weighty words uttered by the king of gods, Dharmarāja narrated (to him) all the great account of Yayāti.

Dharmarāja said :

4b-11. O lord of gods, listen what for I have come. I will here only (i.e. just now) tell (you) why I have come. The noble son of Nahuṣa, the devotee of Viṣṇu, has made all human beings that live on the earth the devotees of Viṣṇu. He has made the nature of the mortal world like that of Vaikuṇṭha. Human beings have become immortal and free from old age and diseases. They just do not commit a sin, nor do they tell a lie. They are free from lust and wrath, and are without greed and delusion. The noble ones are given to charity and all of them are devoted to religion. With all good works they worship sound Nārāyaṇa. Due to (the practice of) that Vaiṣṇava religion all men on the earth are healthy, free from grief, and all have a steady youth. O god, as the Dūrvā (grass) and the bunyan trees spread on the earth, in the same way they have expanded (i.e. grown in number) due to their sons, grandsons and great-grandsons. With their sons and great-grandsons they have gone from one dynasty to another (i.e. have started various dynasties).

12-15a. Thus that son of Nahuṣa has made the entire mortal world the devotee of Viṣṇu and free from old age and death. Being free from (i.e. having no) function I have (as though) become deprived of my position. I have thus told you everything that puts an end to my job. Knowing thus, O thousand-eyed (Indra), do what is beneficial to this world. I have told you all this as I was asked by you. For this reason, O Indra, I have come into your proximity (i.e. to you).

Indra said :

15b-18a. O great Dharmarāja, formerly only I had sent my messenger (i.e. Mātali) for coming over of that noble one (i.e. to bring here that noble Yayāti). Even my messenger spoke to him. (But Yayāti said to him:) "I do not desire the pleasures in heaven. I shall not (at all) come to heaven. I shall make the entire globe of the nature of heaven." Thus the king told (my messenger). He is protecting his subjects. Due to the power of his righteousness I always remain imperiled.

Dharma said :

18b-19a. O illustrious lord of gods, if you desire what is dear to me, then bring that good king (to heaven) by any means.

19b-22a. O king, having heard these words of that Dharmarāja, the intelligent lord of gods considered everything from a factual point of view. God Indra of a noble mind, having called Cupid and Gandharvas, brought Cuckoo and Rati. (He told them:) "Do that by which the king will come (here). Ordered by me you should go to the earth. (There should be) no hesitation (about it)."

Kāma (i.e. Cupid) said :

22b-23a. There is no doubt that I shall do what is agreeable and favourable to you. See me and the king standing (opposite each other) in a battle.

23b-24. Saying, 'All right', all went there where that king, Nahuṣa's son, was. O brāhmaṇa, all of them, Kāma and others,

in the form of actors (i.e. having disguised themselves) greeted the king with blessings and related their good drama (i.e. with good acting spoke to him).

25-33. Having heard those words of them, the intelligent lord of the earth, Yayāti, arranged a divine assembly, with very learned men. The king, proficient in sacred and profane knowledge, himself came (there). That king, the son of Nahuṣa, saw that drama. (He saw) the life of Vāmana, also his birth as a brāhmaṇa. At that time Jarā (i.e. old age), in the form of a woman matchless in beauty in the world, sang an excellent, melodious, song, O king. Due to the charm of her singing and due to her graceful laughter (i.e. smile), and on account of her sweet words, and due to the device, manner and divine behaviour of Cupid he was deluded. Cupid had a form as that of Bali, or of the row of Vindhya or of Vāmana, formerly. Cupid himself became the principal actor and the stage manager, and Spring was his assistant. That Rati, whose husband was delighted, put on the apparel of the chief actress. In that dance-performance she moved in the retiring room. The very intelligent Cuckoo excited the king. As the glorious king saw the excellent dance and listened to the excellent music he was deluded by (these) presented by the chief actress (i.e. Rati).

CHAPTER SEVENTYSEVEN

Yayāti Yields to Passion

Sukarman said :

1-5. The king of kings was allured by the charm of Cupid's music and his charming smile and his appearance as an actor, O Pippala. Having urinated and evacuated his bowels, the king, Nahuṣa's son, sat on his seat without having washed his feet. Having reached (i.e. seized) that opportunity, Jarā (i.e. old age) moved on to the king. Cupid also accomplished the act, beneficial to Indra, O best king. When the drama was over, and they had

left, the religious-minded king was overcome with old age, had his mind attached to lust, was allured by the delusion (caused) by Cupid, was perturbed, had his organs weakened; the virtuous (king) was very much stupefied, and was driven away by objects of sense.

6-11a. Once the king eager for the vice of hunting (i.e. eager to go ahunting) went (to a forest). Being under the influence of infatuation and attachment, he sported in the forest. When the glorious king was sporting with interest a matchless deer with four horns came (there). O king, its entire body was beautiful, its hair was of golden appearance, its body was well spotted with gemlike brightness; it was beautiful and attractive. The archer (i.e. the king) with an arrow in his hand, ran (to it) with speed. The intelligent (king) thought that some demon had come (there). The deer too drew the king away. He went (after it) with the speed of a chariot, and suffered from exhaustion. While he was watching, the deer vanished.

11b-20. There he saw a wonderful forest, resembling Indra's garden; it was crowded with beautiful trees, and looked splendid with the five elements, with big sacred sandal trees and with charming groups of plantain trees, with (the trees like) Bakula, Aśoka, Punnāga, Nālikera (i.e. the cocoa-nut trees), Tinduka, Pūgiphala (betel-nut trees), date-trees, lotuses and Saptaparṇa trees, blossomed Karṇikāra (trees), and various trees that always had fruit, so also with Ketaka and Pāṭala. While seeing (these) the great king saw an excellent lake. It was full of holy water; it was extensive (spreading) over five yojanas; it was crowded with swans and ducks; it was resounding with aquatic birds; it was also delightful with lotuses; it looked charming with red lotuses, and was decorated with golden lotuses; it looked extremely charming due to white lotuses; it was everywhere resounding with intoxicated bees also. Thus he saw the lake endowed with all excellences. It was five yojanas broad and ten yojanas long. The lake was auspicious on all sides; and was adorned with divine objects. Fatigued by the speed of the chariot and tormented by weariness he sat in the shade of a mango tree on its bank.

21-26a. Having bathed in it, and having drunk (i.e. he drank) its cold water scented with fragrance of lotuses, resembling nectar, and removing all exhaustion. The king seated in the

shade of the tree, somehow heard the sound of a song being sung (by someone). The sound was heard as (would be the sound of) the song which a divine woman would sing. The great king, who loved music, became extremely thoughtful. When the noble one was thus anxious and thought for a moment, a woman, with plump hips and breasts arrived in the forest, when the king was looking on. She, whose body looked beautiful with all ornaments, and having the wealth of good character and (auspicious) marks, came to the forest and stood before the king.

26b-32a. To her the king said: "Who are you? To whom do you belong? Why have you come here? Tell me the reason for it." O Pippala, that woman of an excellent face, when thus asked at that time by him, did not give either a good or a bad reply to the king. That woman, with the neck of the lute in her hand, laughed, and quickly went (away). The great king was then filled with great wonder: 'When talked to by me, she is not giving a reply.' Again that king Yayāti thought: '(This) four horns which I had seen. I think that is the truth. This must truly be a deceitful form of (i.e. taken up by) demons.' O brāhmaṇa, the king Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, thought (like this) for a moment.

32b-38a. When the king was thinking like this; the woman, laughing at the prince, vanished in the forest. In the meanwhile, he again heard the song, which was melodious, very divine, and accompanied with intonation and a regulated rise and fall of sounds through the musical scale. The king went to that place (from) where the great sound of the song was coming. In the water was an excellent lotus having a thousand petals. On it was an excellent woman, who was endowed with (good) character, beauty and virtues. She was possessing divine marks; she was adorned with divine ornaments; she shone with divine objects; her hand was engaged in holding the neck of a lute. She was singing a melodious song, accompanied with beating and measuring time and pause. With the power of that song she allured the mobile and the immobile, and also gods, groups of sages, all demons, Gandharvas and Kinnaras.

38b-42a. Seeing that (woman) of broad eyes and having beauty and lustre (he thought) in the mobile and the immobile world there is no other woman like her. Formerly, great Cupid, the actor, had got into the body of the king; he manifested him-

self at that time. As fire, having come in contact with ghee sends forth rays of light (i.e. is bright), so Cupid (i.e. passion) manifested himself, after having (i.e. after the king had) seen her. His mind was overpowered by Cupid (i.e. passion) on seeing that woman of charming eyes. (He thought:) 'I have never (before) seen such a young woman, alluring the world.'

42b-43. Thinking for a moment, the king had his mind attached to passion. Due to separation from her, the king, being burnt by the fire of passion and tormented by the fever of passion, longed for her.

44-46. (He thought:) 'How will she be mine? How will she have love (for me)? My life will be fruitful when this young girl having her face like a lotus and having lotus-like eyes embraces me, or if she is obtained by me.' Having thought like this that virtuous king Yayāti said to that beautiful woman: "O auspicious one, who are you? To whom do you belong?" That woman who was seen before is again seen (by me).

47-52a. The righteous one asked her: "Who is this (woman) by your side? O auspicious one, tell (me) everything. I am the son of Nahuṣa. O good one, I am born in the lunar dynasty and am the lord of the seven islands. O respectable lady, my name is Yayāti; I am well-known in the three worlds. My heart thus entertains a desire for union with you. O good lady, unite with me, do what is very dear (to me). O good lady, there is no doubt that I shall give you whatever you desire. O you of an excellent complexion, I am struck with invincible passion. Therefore, protect me, who am extremely helpless, and who have sought your shelter. For (i.e. in exchange for) the union with you I shall give my kingdom, the entire earth or even my body. All these three worlds are yours."

52b-55a. Having heard the words of that king, that woman with a lotus-like face said to her friend (named) Viśālā: "Tell the king that has come (here), my name, the place of my birth, (the names of) my father and mother, O you good lady. Also tell him about my love (for him)." Understanding her desire, Viśālā with sweet words then spoke to the king: "O prince, listen."

Viśālā said :

55b-71a. This Cupid was formerly burnt by Śambhu (i.e.

Śiva), the god of gods. That Rati, deprived of her husband, wept melodiously due to grief. O best king, at that time that Rati lived in this lake. O king of kings, then gods, having heard, like this, her melodious wailing attended by grief, had great compassion (on her). They spoke (these) words to Śaṅkara: "O great god, revive the mind-born (Cupid) again. O glorious one, of what nature will she be (i.e. what will be the plight of her) who is helpless, being deprived of her husband? Due to your affection for us (i.e. since you love us, please) make her united with Cupid." Hearing those words (Śiva) said: "I shall revive Cupid. This mind-born one (i.e. Cupid), having five arrows, even though without a body, will again be the friend of Spring. There is no doubt about it. He will live with a divine body; (and) not otherwise (i.e. not with any other body)." That fish-bannered god (i.e. Cupid), became alive due to the grace of the great god (i.e. Śiva). O best man, having thus approved of the desire of the respectable lady (i.e. Rati), with blessings (Śiva said:) "O Cupid, go and always thrive with your beloved." Thus (the god) of great lustre, the cause of the sustenance and destruction (of the world) said (to Cupid). Cupid again came to the lake where unhappy Rati remained. O king this is (that lake called) Kāmasaras (i.e. belonging to Cupid) where Rati is well-settled. She was overcome with grief when noble Cupid was burnt (by Śiva). From Rati's wrath sprang up a fire of a fearful form. He too, very much scorched Rati, who fainted. O best man, she, deprived of her husband, shed tears. From her eyes tears fell into the water. From them arose great grief destroying all happiness. O best king, after (that) Jarā (i.e. old age) came into being from the tears. From them the dull-headed destroyer, viz. Separation sprang up. Both the terrible Grief and Torture also then sprang up. From them was generated Delusion—terrible and destroying happiness. O great king, from Grief the Fever of Passion and Error originated. The distressed Wailing, Insanity and Death, destroying everything, arose from her tears.

71b-79. O great king, by Rati's side all assuming the body of torment and, all having the virtues of good feelings, originated incarnate. O king, then someone said: "This (is) Cupid (that) has come." Seeing Cupid that had come (there) she (i.e. Rati) was filled with great joy. Tears fell from her eyes . O great king,

in the water beings quickly originated. O best man, at that time (a lady) named Love sprang up, so also Renown and Shame. O best king, from them (i.e. from the tears) rose great Joy and the other one, viz. Peace. Two auspicious daughters giving pleasures and enjoyments sprang up. O king, there was a great combination of diversion, sport and devotion of mind. O king, due to joy tears fell from Rati's left eye into water. From them sprang up a good lotus. O best man, from that good lotus came up this beautiful lady, the daughter of Rati, Aśrubindumatī by name. Through love for her, I, always pleased and virtuous, ever remain near her, giving her pleasure, due to my being her friend. My name is known as (i.e. I am known by the name) Viśālā. O king, I am Varuṇa's daughter.

80-81a. Being always affectionate to her, I remain near her through love for her. I have thus told you all her (account) and mine also. O lord of kings, this beautiful one, desiring a husband, practised penance.

The king said :

81b-83a. O auspicious one, I have understood everything that you have told me; listen, let this beautiful daughter of Rati choose me. I shall give this young lady all that she desires. O auspicious lady, do that by which she will be under my influence.

Viśālā said :

83b-88. I shall tell you her resolve. Listen to it, O king. She desires as her groom a man, who is endowed with youth; who is omniscient; who has the characteristics of a brave man; who resembles the lord of gods; who possesses righteous conduct; who is brilliant; very bright, a donor, and the best among sacrificers; who knows (i.e. appreciates) virtues and devotion to religion; who possesses righteousness and good conduct; who is like Indra in the world; who is intent on religious practices through (performing) great sacrifices; who is endowed with all grandeur; who is as it were another Viṣṇu; who is always very much liked by gods, and is very dear to brāhmaṇas; who is friendly to brāhmaṇas; who knows the truth of the Vedas; whose valour is known in the three worlds. She desires such a groom as

is endowed with these qualities and is honoured in the three worlds, is very intelligent and very dear and handsome.

Yayāti said :

89. Know me, who have come here, to be endowed with these qualities. There is no doubt that the Creator has created (in me) a husband worthy of her.

Viśālā said :

90. O king, I know that in the three worlds you are rich with religious merit. The qualities which I have mentioned before exist in you.

91. Only due to one blemish she does not think highly of you. This doubt has arisen in me. (Otherwise) O king, you are full of Viṣṇu.

Yayāti said :

92. Tell me the great blemish which this one, beautiful in all limbs, does not really prize. Be well disposed to favour me.

Viśālā said :

93. O lord of the world why (i.e. how) do you not know your own blemish? Your body is covered with old age. Due to this (blemish) she does not prize you.

94. Hearing these great (important) and disagreeable words, the lord of the world, the king, overcome with great grief, again said:

95. "O auspicious lady, this blemish of old age in my body is not due to anybody's contact. I do not know (how) this old age has occurred to my body.

96. O auspicious one, whatever thing difficult to obtain in the world she desires, I am willing to give it to her. Choose the best boon."

Viśālā said :

97-100. When you would be free from old age, then she would be your very beloved (wife). This is certain, O king; I am

telling (you) the truth (and) the truth (only). Youth would prevail over his body who passes on his old age to his son, (or) brother, (or) servant after taking youth from him and giving him his old age. Due to good taste a happy agreement takes place between the two. He, O king, has the same fruit as the merit of him who offers himself through pity. There is no doubt about it.

101-103. He would have great religious merit when the merit obtained through difficulty is given to someone else. The fruit of merit is (thus) obtained. Therefore, O king, give (your old age) to your son, and after having obtained (youth) from him, come back with (i.e. after having got) handsomeness. Do (so) then, O king, when you desire to enjoy (her).

Thus, speaking to the king, that Viśālā ceased (speaking).

Sukarman said :

104a. Having heard like this, the best king then spoke to Viśālā.

The king said :

104b-106. O noble one, let it be so; I shall do your words (i.e. do as you have told me).

That stupid lord of the earth, Yayāti, overcome with passion, having gone home, and having called his sons Turu, Pūru, Kuru and Yadu, loving the father, said (these) words (to them): "Upon my order, O sons, bring happiness (to me)."

The sons said :

107-108. The words (i.e. the order) of the father—whether good or bad—have (has) to be executed by the sons. O father, speak out quickly, and know that it (i.e. the order) is carried out. There is no doubt.

Having heard these words of the sons, the lord of the earth, with his mind overcome with joy, again spoke to them.

CHAPTER SEVENTYEIGHT

Pūru Gives His Youth to Yayāti

Yayāti said :

1-4. O my noble sons, the wise one among you should take this my old age which is giving me pain, and should give his own youth and excellent form (to me); (so that) I shall behave as I like. Today my very fickle mind is inflamed, and is attached to a woman. As fire whirls round the water in a pot, similarly, O (my) sons, my mind is very much shaken by the fire of passion. O (my) sons, one (of you) should take this my old age which is giving me pain, and should give (me) his youth; (so that) I shall behave according to my will.

5-6. He, the best son, who passes on his youth to me, will enjoy my kingdom, and will wield my bow (and carry on) my line. He will have happiness, ample wealth, riches and grains. He will have many children and glory and fame.

The sons said :

7. O king, you are a king who are devoted to religion. You are guarding your subjects truthfully. Due to what has this idea, naturally fickle, arisen in you?

The king said :

8-10. Formerly dancers, superior dancers, came to my city. Due to them such delusion has arisen in me, when Cupid had allured me. My body is covered with old age; and my mind was overcome with Cupid (i.e. passion). O best sons, I was smit and overcome by passion. I saw a beautiful maiden of a divine form. O sons, I spoke to her; but the good one did not say anything.

11-13. Her charming and clever friend is Viśālā by name. She spoke good words to me, giving me joy: "When you would be free from old age, the very dear one will be yours." I accepted (i.e. agreed to) these words spoken by her, and (then) came home. To get rid of my old age, I have thus told you that (she had told me). O good sons, realizing thus, you should do (what gives) me pleasure.

Turu said :

14-18. By the favour of the father and the mother, body is obtained by sons. O king, with the (help of the) body religious acts are done by a wise man. A son should especially serve his father. Yet, O king, this is not the time for me to give my youth (to you). O king, men should enjoy the pleasures of senses in youth. Now it is not properly the time for you (to enjoy these pleasures). (You say) O father, that pleasure would be enjoyed by you after you give your ripe old age to your sons; but (then) you would not have (that much) life (i.e. you would not live that long). Therefore, O great king, I shall not do your words (i.e. do as you say).

In this way the eldest son, Turu, spoke to him at that time.

19. Hearing those words of Turu, the king became angry. The pious one, with his eyes red with anger, cursed Turu.

20-26 "O you of a wicked heart, you have disobeyed this order of mine. Therefore, be a sinful person outcast by all religions. You will be without the lock of hair on the crown of the head; you will be deprived of the sacred texts; you will be without all manners. There is no doubt about this. You will be the killer of brāhmaṇas; you will be ruined by gods; you will be a drunkard; you will be without truthfulness; you will do fierce deeds; you will be the meanest man. You will be addicted to drinking; you will be hungry, sinful and a killer of cows. Your skin will be bad; you will have the hem of your lower garment untucked; you will hate brāhmaṇas; you will be deformed. You will be an adulterer; you will be very fierce; you will be very lustful; you will eat everything; you will always be wicked. You will have sexual intercourse with a woman of your own kin; you will destroy all religious practices; you will be without sacred knowledge; and you will suffer from leprosy. Your sons and grandsons also will destroy all holy objects, will be barbarians, and will be very much spoilt like this (i.e. in the same way)."

27. Having thus cursed Turu very badly, he spoke to (his other) son, Yadu: "Take on (my) old age now, and enjoy the kingdom free from any source of vexation."

28a. Joining the palms of his hands, Yadu said to the king:

Yadu said :

28b-30. O father, I am unable to bear the burden of (your) old age; (please) be kind to (i.e. excuse) me. There are five causes of old age: frigidity, journey, bad food, aged woman, and disinclination of the mind. O king, I am not able (to put up with) the misery in my youth (i.e. while I am young). Who is able to hold (up old age)? Now (please) excuse me.

31-32. O son of a brāhmaṇa, the angry great king cursed Yadu: "Your lineage shall never deserve a kingdom. It will be without power, lustre, forbearance, and will be deprived of the practices of kṣatriyas (since you have) turned (your) back upon my order. There is no uncertainty about it."

Yadu said :

33. O great king, I am faultless; why have you now cursed me? (Please) favour the poor one (i.e. me). Be pleased to favour me.

The king said :

34. O son, (when) the great god will take birth with his portion in your family, then your family will be purified.

Yadu said :

35. O great king, you have cursed me, your son, who am faultless; If you have compassion for me, (please) favour me.

The king said :

36. He who is the eldest son should remove the misery of the father. He well enjoys the inheritance of the kingdom, and he would bear the burden (of the kingdom).

37-38a. You have not done (your) duty, (therefore) you are certainly not fit to be talked to. You have destroyed (i.e. disobeyed) the order of me who (can) strike with a great (i.e. heavy) punishment. Therefore you cannot be favoured, do as you please.

Yadu said :

38b-42a. O king, since you have destroyed my kingdom, form and family, therefore, I, the chief of your family, will be wicked. In your family will be (born) kṣatriyas of various forms. There is no doubt that very fierce and very mighty (beings) will enjoy their villages, good regions, their women, and whatever gems they will have. From my family (will) be born Turuṣkas of the form of barbarians—those who were destroyed and who were cursed by you with very fierce curses.

O best king, the angry Yadu thus spoke to the king (Yayāti).

42b-45. Then the angry great king again cursed (Yadu) thus: "Listen, know all that will be born in your family will ruin my subjects. As long as the moon, the sun, the earth, the constellations and the stars (last) the mlecchas will be roasted in the Kumbhīpāka and the Raurava (hells)." Then seeing the young Kuru playing, and possessed of good marks, the king did not call that son (of him) a prince. Knowing Kuru to be a child, the king left him then.

46-47a. Then the lord of the world (i.e. Yayāti) called Pūru, the meritorious son of Śarmiṣṭhā, and said to him: "Take my old age and enjoy my extremely good kingdom, with the sources of nuisance eradicated, (and) given by me (to you)."

Pūru said :

47b-49a. The lord (if you) should enjoy the kingdom as was enjoyed by your father, I shall obey your order. O king, give me your old age in exchange for my youth. Today only appearing handsome, enjoy, with your mind attached to objects of sense, pleasures and good deeds.

49b-54a. O noble one, sport with her as long as you desire. O father, as long as I live I shall keep up old age.

Thus addressed by that Pūru, the lord of the world, with his heart full of great joy, said again to his son: "O child, since you did not disobey my order, (on the contrary) obeyed it, therefore I shall give you much happiness. O you very intelligent one, since you took my old age, and gave me your own youth, therefore you enjoy the kingdom given by me." O king, that good

Pūru, thus addressed by that king, gave him his youth and took old age from him.

54b-60a. When, O dear one, the exchange of the ages of the father and the son was effected, Pūru appeared to be older than the king in all his limbs. The king reached youth, (and looked like a man) sixteen years old, and possessing great charm (looked) as it were he was another Cupid. The great king gave that noble Pūru everything—(his) bow, kingdom, umbrella, fan, seat, and elephant, (so also) his entire treasure, country, army, chowrie and also the chariot. That Nahuṣa's righteous son, attached to passion, thinking of that maiden, went with quick steps, to that lake known as Kāma, and resembling an ocean, where Aśrubindumatī (stayed). Seeing that eminent maiden of large eyes and having beautiful and plump breasts, the great king, with his mind attracted by Cupid, said to Viśālā:

The king said :

60b-62a. O you noble and eminent one of charming eyes, I have, O auspicious one, given up my old age, and am (now) endowed with youth. Becoming a young man, I have come (here). Let her be mine now. There is no doubt that I shall give her whatever she desires.

Viśālā said :

62b-63a. When (now) you have come after having abandoned the wicked old age, (yet) you are still covered by one blemish. (Therefore) she does not prize you.

The king said :

63b-64. If you definitely know my blemish then tell it (to me). I shall certainly abandon that blemish of an inferior nature.

CHAPTER SEVENTYNINE

Youthful Yayāti Enjoys with Aśrubindumatī

Viśālā said:

1-2. There (i.e. in that king) only, whose wife is Śarmiṣṭhā and whose wife is beautiful Devayānī, good fortune is seen. This cannot be false, O king; then O glorious king, how are you fascinated by (the beauty of) this maiden's body* since you are known as a husband having two wives?

3-4a. Like sandal, O king, you are with serpents (around) you. O king, as a great sandal-tree is surrounded by serpents, so you are surrounded by serpents called co-wives.

4b-6a. It is better to enter fire, it is better to fall from (mountain) top, but not good to have the dear husband, possessing handsomeness and lustre, (but) with co-wives—with the poison in the form of co-wives. Therefore she does not prize you, an ocean of mertis, as her lover.

The king said:

6b-7a. O beautiful lady, I have nothing to do with Devayānī, nor with Śarmiṣṭhā; for this purpose see my treasure full of righteousness.

Aśrubindumatī said:

7b-9a. O king, I shall be the enjoyer of your kingdom and your body. O king you will certainly (have to) do whatever I shall tell you to do. For this purposes, O you who love piety, give me your hand endowed with many virtues and having auspicious marks.

The King said:

9b-11a. O you of an excellent complexion, I shall not have any other wife than you. O you beautiful lady, O you lady of charming body, enjoy my entire kingdom with its wealth, so

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*The existing reading कार्यवशो does not give any sense. It should better be replaced by कायवशो which we have translated here. (Ed.)

also the whole earth and my body. (In proof of this) I have offered this my hand to you. O good lady, I (shall) do whatever you (will) tell (me).

Aśrubindumatī said:

11b. Just with this (promise), O noble one, I shall be your wife.

12-16a. Hearing this, Yayāti, the lord of the earth, the king of kings, with his eyes full of joy, married by the Gāndharva way that auspicious daughter of Cupid. The noble son of king (Nahuṣa) enjoyed with her, on sea-beaches, in forests and parks. The king, lord of kings, youthfully sported with her on mountains and in beautiful rivers. In this way, O best king, that noble king Yayāti passed twenty thousand (years) in sporting with her.

Viṣṇu said :

16b-17a. O very intelligent one, through the fraudulent act of Cupid, that great king Yayāti was thus allured by her for the benefit of Indra at that time.

Sukarman said:

17b-19. O Pippala, that lord of the earth, Yayāti, stupefied by Cupid's daughter by means of her alluring passion and charming union, was not aware of day or night. Once that daughter of Cupid of charming eyes said to that stupefied, submissive, obedient king Yayāti, who had bowed down:

Aśrubindumatī said :

20. O dear one, a desire is produced (in me); so satisfy (that) desire of me: perform the best sacrifice, viz. Aśvamedha, O lord of the earth.

The king said :

21-24a. O glorious one, let it be so; I shall do what you very much like.

He invited his eldest son, who had no desire to enjoy the kingdom. (The son), when called, came there with his neck (i.e. head) bent with devotion, and joining the palms of

his hands, saluted (Yayāti) at that time. With his neck (i.e. head) bent, he also saluted her feet. "O King, give me an order since I, who was called, have come. O noble one, what should I do? I am your servant who has bowed to you."

The king said :

24b-29. O son, inviting brāhmaṇas, meritorious priests officiating at sacrifices, and kings, make preparations for a horse-sacrifice.

Thus addressed, that very lustrous and highly religious Pūru did everything in full as told by the glorious one. With the daughter of Cupid he took proper initiation (i.e. got himself consecrated for the sacrifice). Yayāti, the lord of the earth, gave various gifts to brāhmaṇas at the place of the sacrifice, so also endless, profuse gifts especially to the poor, O great king; and at the end of the sacrifice he said to that beautiful lady : "O young lady, tell me what else dear to you I should do. O beautiful lady, I shall do all that which is attainable and not attainable."

Sukarman said :

30-37. Thus addressed by the king, she spoke in reply "O king, a desire is produced in me; O innocent one, do (i.e. satisfy) it. O great king, I desire to see the very pleasing heaven of Indra, of Brahmā, so also of Śiva and of Viṣṇu. O noble one, show (these) to me, if I am very dear to you." Thus addressed by her, the king said to her who was very dear to him : "O you beautiful one, well, well, you are just saying pious things. O you beautiful lady, I think what you said due to feminine nature, fickleness and curiosity, is unattainable, O noble one. That is attainable by means of pious gifts, sacrifice, and austerities; what you told cannot be attained by any other means, O beautiful lady. You have just said something that is unattainable as it is mixed up (i.e. connected with) religious merit. I have not as yet seen or heard about a very meritorious man who has gone to heaven with his (human) body from the mortal world. Therefore, O you beautiful lady, what you said is unattainable for me. I shall do something else. O dear one tell me that."

The respectable lady said :

38-40. O king, it is certainly not attainable for other human beings; but it is attainable for you; I am telling the truth (and) truth only. O king, in the mortal world there is no other human being like you in (practising) penance, in fame, in doing valourous acts, (giving) gifts and (performing) sacrifices. Everything—the power of a kṣatriya, fire of energy—is established in you. Therefore, O son of Nahuṣa, this (thing) dear to me should be done (by you).

CHAPTER EIGHTY

Yadu Refuses to Kill His Mothers

Pippala said :

1-2. O best brāhmaṇa, when the king (Yayāti) married the daughter of Cupid, what did his two former, very auspicious, wives, viz. the noble Devayānī and Śarmiṣṭhā, the daughter of Vṛṣaparvan do? Tell me the entire account of the two.

Sukarman said :

3-9a. When that king took home Cupid's daughter, that high-minded Devayānī very much entered into rivalry (with her). "For her he, with his mind overcome with anger, cursed two of his sons (viz. Turu and Yadu)." The renowned one, having called Śarmiṣṭhā, said these words to her. Śarmiṣṭhā and Devayānī vied with her in beauty, lustre, charity, truthfulness and holy vows. Then Kāma's daughter knew their wickedness. Just then only she told everything to the king, O brāhmaṇa. Then the great king, getting angry, called Yadu and said to him : "Go and kill Śarmiṣṭhā and also (Devayānī) the daughter of Śukra. O son, if you care for felicity then do what is very dear to me." Having heard those words of his father, Yadu then replied to his father, the lord of kings :

9b-14. "O proud father, I shall not kill these two mothers, free from guilt. Those well-versed in the Vedas have declared a great sin in killing one's mother. Therefore, O great king, I shall not kill these two mothers. O great king, (even) if a mother or a sister or a daughter is stained with a hundred blemishes she should never be killed by sons or brothers. Knowing this, O great king, I shall never kill (these) two mothers." Hearing, at that time, the words of Yadu, the king became angry. Yayāti, the lord of the earth, then cursed his son: "Since you have disobeyed (my) order, you, resembling a sinner, polluted by my curse, enjoy a portion of your mother".

15-19. Speaking thus to his son Yadu, that lord of the earth, Yayāti, that great king of great glory, having cursed his son, and without being solely devoted to Viṣṇu, enjoyed pleasures with her. That Aśrubindumatī of charming eyes and beautiful in all limbs, enjoyed with him all lovely enjoyments as liked by her. Thus that noble Yayāti passed his time. All other subjects were without any loss or without old age; all people were solely devoted to the meditation of glorious Viṣṇu. O noble Pippala, all people were happy and served the good by means of penance, truthfulness and meditation on Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER EIGHTYONE

Destiny is Irresistible

Sukarman said :

1-3. This very intelligent Indra, always afraid of the noble Yayāti, seeing his valour and many meritorious acts like (giving) gifts, sent the celestial nymph Menakā to act as a messenger. (He said to her:) "O good and illustrious one, go and tell (i.e. convey) my order. Going from here tell Cupid's daughter the words (i.e. the order) of (me), the lord of gods: 'Bring the king here by any means (i.e. somehow).' "

4. Hearing this, that Menakā sent (by Indra) went there; and told her all that the lord of gods had said.

5-8. Having thus told her that Menakā, directed by her (i.e. Cupid's daughter) went (back to Indra). When Menakā had left, that high-minded, glorious daughter of Rati reminded the king of the lawful agreement: "O King, with a truthful speech, you formerly brought me (here); in the meantime you gave me your hand, and brought me to your residence. O king, you must do here (i.e. now) only what I tell you. O hero, you have not done what I told you; I shall abandon you and go (back) to my father's house."

The king said :

9. O good one, I shall certainly do what you have told me. O respectable lady, leaving (i.e. not telling) what is unattainable, tell me what is attainable.

Aśrubindumatī said :

10-19a. For this purpose, O lord of the earth, I choose you in marriage, knowing that you are having all (auspicious) marks and endowed with all virtues, and knowing that you would accomplish everything, support everything, practise all good usages and create (i.e. perform) religious rites, and would obtain all the three worlds, and knowing that you are matchless in the three worlds. I know you to be a devotee and the best among the followers of Viṣṇu. With this hope I formerly took you for my husband. He who has the grace of Viṣṇu would move everywhere. O lord of kings, here is nothing that cannot be accomplished (by you) in three worlds—mobile or immobile; for you of a good vow (everything) is (attainable) in all the worlds. Due to Viṣṇu's grace only you can freely move in the sky. Having come to the world of mortals, O lord of the earth, you have made people free from old age, grey hair and death. You yourself have devised many desire-yielding trees near all the doors of the houses of men, O king. To the houses of men you yourself have sent sages and have always firmly settled the desire-yielding cows in their houses, O king. You have made men happy by (satisfying) all their desires. In a house a thousand nobly born people are seen.

19b-26a. Thus you have increased the human race. In spite of Yama's opposition and that of Indra too, O king, you made

the mortal world free from diseases and sins. O great king, by means of your prowess and self-respect you have shown the earth to have the form of heaven. There is no other king like you. No man is born or will be born like you. I know you to be the illuminator of the entire religion. Therefore I took you as my husband; giving up joke, O lord of kings, speak the truth before me. O king, if you have truth and piety then speak the truth. "I do not move in divine worlds, nor can I freely move in the sky". When, giving up truth, (you say like this), you will never go to heaven; your words will be certainly false; and all good things done formerly will be reduced to ashes.

The king said :

26b-29. O good lady, you spoke the truth, there is nothing like unattainable for me. Due to the good grace of the lord of the world everything is attainable for me. O respectable lady, listen to the reason for which I am not going to heaven. They will not allow deities to go to the mortal world; as a result all the human beings—my subjects—will be having death when abandoned by me; there is no doubt about this, O you beautiful lady. I do not desire to go to heaven; I have told you the truth, O you beautiful lady.

The respectable lady said :

30. O king, having seen the worlds, you will again come (back). Today fulfil my matchless strong desire.

The king said :

31-40. I shall certainly do all that you have said.

That very lustrous king Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, having (thus) observed and thus spoken to his beloved then thought : 'A fish though moving in the water, is bound (i.e. caught) in a net. A deer even having the speed like that of the wind is bound. A bird sees a prey even though it is at a distance of a thousand yojanas. Being deluded by destiny it does not see the noose sticking to its neck. Destiny brings about good and bad things. Destiny destroys honour. Destiny brings about humiliation by remaining

wheresoever (it pleases). It makes a man a donor or a suitor. Destiny holds everything —all immobile and other beings (living) in heaven or on the earth. Destiny alone is this world. It is without origin and death and is the greatest cause of the world. Destiny ripens the worlds as the fruit laid on a tree. Hymns, penance, charity, friends or relatives are not able to protect a man oppressed by destiny. It is not possible to overcome the three nooses of destiny: marriage, birth and death—when and where one would have these, and with whom or through whom. As the clouds in the sky are moved by the wind, so the world is moved by destiny united with (the fruits of) the deeds (of beings).

Sukarman said :

41-67. But the destiny, which, united with Karman (the deeds), is adored by men, would (only) urge Karman (the fruits of the deeds), and does not create it. In the human (world), calamities, misfortunes, serpents and diseases, move (in accordance with) their being decided by (one's) deeds. All those that are the causes and means of happiness, being mixed with merit, are united with (the fruits of) deeds. They would not see (i.e. would not care for what is) auspicious and (what is) inauspicious. (Obscure!) relatives united with (the fruits of) deeds may exchange them*; but (the fruits of) deeds (alone) urge men on to happiness and unhappiness in this world. As gold or silver has its nature fixed, similarly a being is bound in accordance with his deeds. These five are produced (i.e. decided) when a man is just in (his mother's) womb: his life (i.e. longevity), deeds, wealth, learning and death. As an agent (potter) fashions from a lifeless lump whatever he wants to fashion, in the same way deeds performed before follow the doer. One becomes a god, or a man, or a beast, or a bird, or a lower animal, or an immobile object, according to one's deeds. He always enjoys in accordance with that only which is accomplished by himself—unhappiness results from one's own deeds; happiness results from one's own deeds. Obtaining the bed of womb, he enjoys the fruit of his deeds of the previous body (i.e. done in the previous existence). On the earth men never (i.e. can never) give up the fruits of their deeds. They

*कर्मदायदिवानोके is most probably a corrupt reading. (Ed.)

are not able to change them by means of their power or intelligence. They enjoy meritorious deeds, pains and pleasures. Reaching (i.e. due to) a cause, a man is always bound by the bonds of his deeds. As from among thousands of cows a calf finds out its mother, similarly the fruit of the auspicious or inauspicious deeds —which is not destroyed except by 'enjoyment (or suffering)— follows its agent. Who can change the fruit of a deed done in a former life? (The fruit of) the deed follows him also who runs very fast. The (fruit of) the deed of a former life, as it was done, sleeps with him who sleeps. It stands by him who stands, and follows him who goes. The (fruit of the) deed of him who acts, acts; it follows him like his shadow. As shade and light are always mutually connected, similarly a deed and its agent are well related. Planets, diseases, poisonous snakes, demonesses[1] and demons trouble a man who is first oppressed by his own deeds. He who is to enjoy happiness or (suffer) unhappiness at a place is bound there by a rope, is forcibly carried away by fate. In giving happiness or unhappiness, destiny alone is the master of beings. O wise one, a deed is conceived in one way by (a person) keeping awake or sleeping, and destiny destroys it (by giving it) another turn. It protects that which should be protected (i.e. which it wants to protect) from weapons, fire, poisons or difficulties. Truly that which cannot be protected, is protected by destiny in this way. That which is destroyed by destiny can never be protected. As seeds that are sown in earth and riches remain (dormant) and (then) grow (active), in the same way deeds remain (intact) in the soul and (then) become active. As due to the exhaustion of oil the flame goes out, so due to the exhaustion of (the fruits of) deeds a being goes to destruction (i.e. departs) from his body; since those who know the truth declare that death is due to the exhaustion (of the fruits) of (one's) deeds. Various beings and diseases are the cause of his death. 'Thus it is ripening of the deeds of my former existence. It is not otherwise. It has (now) certainly come (to me) in the form of this lady; there is no doubt about it. Actors, dancers and bards had to come to my house; due to their contact, old age

1. Sākini—a kind of female being, attendant on Durgā supposed to be a demoness or fairy.

has resorted to my body. I think everything is done by (i.e. due to) one's deeds (in a former existence), since it has (now) definitely sprung up.

68a. Therefore deeds are the main (factor); efforts are useless.

68b-74. Formerly the king of gods had sent the best messenger by name Mātali, for (taking) me (to heaven). I did not do his words (i.e. what he told me). I now see the ripening of those deeds.' He (Yayāti) was thus full of anxiety, and was overcome with great affliction. (He thought:) 'If with pleasure I do not do what she says, then both my truthfulness and piety would go (i.e. perish); there is no doubt about it. Whatever was decided in accordance with my deeds has come; (what is predestined) will certainly take place. Destiny is difficult to overcome.' Yayāti, the lord of the earth, was thus absorbed in thought. He sought the refuge of Kṛṣṇa, Hari, the remover of distress, by meditating upon him, saluting him, and praising him (as): 'O you to whom Lakṣmī is dear, protect me who have sought your refuge.'

CHAPTER EIGHTYTWO

Yayāti Takes Back His Old Age

Sukarman said :

1-8. When the king was thus absorbed in thinking, that beautiful daughter of Rati said : "O you very intelligent king, what do you think just now? There is no doubt that mostly women are fickle. I am not leading you away through fickleness. I am not making use of a fraudulent expedient today, O best king, (by speaking) as other greedy women speak, something that cannot be done, through greed and delusion. A strong desire to see all the worlds is produced in my heart. Seeing deities is meritorious, and is very difficult to be had even by good men. Say to me, O king, that you will cause (i.e. help) me to see the deities. Like another ordinary man, afraid of a great misery and

fallen into the ditch of delusion, you are thinking if there would be a great sin due to my company now. Give up your anxiety; you should not go to heaven. I shall never do that which gives you pain."

9-11. The king, thus addressed (by her), said to that beautiful woman : "O respectable lady, now listen to what I have thought out. I see (here) insult, and not the (satisfying of) my mind. O beloved, when I go to the heaven, my subjects will be helpless. The wicked-minded Yama will trouble my subjects with diseases. O beautiful one, I shall go to heaven with you."

12-26. Having thus spoken to her and having called his best son Pūru, possessing old age and of a great intelligence (he said to him:) "Come on, O you who know all the customary observances, you certainly know your duty. O you religious-minded one, you have preserved piety by my order. O son, give me (my) old age back, and take back (your) youth. Protect this kingdom of mine along with the treasure, army and vehicles. Enjoy the earth full of gems, along with villages, forests and cities given (to you) by me. O sinless one, you should do the protection of the subjects which is meritorious; on the authority of the sacred texts you should always punish the wicked and protect the good. O glorious one, you should protect the brāhmaṇas by your deeds devoutly and according to the rules, since they are worthy of respect in the three worlds. Every fifth or seventh day inspect the treasure and meet the learned. You should always honour your army by favouring them and giving them wealth and food. Always use your spies as your eyes, and always be engaged in charity. Always be restrained in your consultation, since it is always to be guarded by very wise men. O son, always control yourself; do not go ahunting. Do not trust anybody—women, treasure or your great army. Always collect worthy persons and all arts. Worship Viṣṇu with sacrifices, and always be virtuous. Everyday crush the sources of nuisance among the subjects. Everyday give your subjects all that is desired by them. Give happiness to the subjects, support the subjects, O son. Have (sexual union with a woman) in your own family (only); do not have it with someone else's wife. Do not think ill about other's wealth; always follow your forefathers. Always ponder over the Vedas and the sacred texls; O child, be engaged in the study

of (the science of handling) weapons. O child, always be contented, and be devoted to your own bed (i.e. wife). Always study elephants, horses and chariots."

27-28. Having thus instructed his son, having congratulated him with blessings, having put him (on the throne) with his own hand, he gave his weapon into his hand. Then Yayāti, the lord of the earth, having taken (back) from (Pūru) his old age, gave him (his youth) and desired to go to heaven.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTHREE

Yayāti Visits the Divine Worlds

Sukarman said :

1-5a. Having called all the subjects from all parts (of the world), the lord of the earth, full of great joy, said : "O best ones my subjects—brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras, along with this lady I am going to Indra's heaven, Brahmā's heaven, Rudra's heaven and then to Viṣṇu's heaven, destroying all sins and causing salvation. There is no doubt about it. With (your) families (you) should stay happily on the earth. O people, I have appointed this glorious and wise Pūru as your guardian and king with the sceptre."

5b-13. Thus addressed, all those subjects said to the king : "O best king, in (i.e. from) all the Vedas and Purāṇas we hear about Dharma; but nobody has seen, as we saw, Dharma, like the one (i.e. you) born in Nahuṣa's great house, in the lunar dynasty, of ten constituents, loving truth, possessing hands, feet and face, propagating all (good) practices, endowed with spiritual and material knowledge, and a great treasure of religious merit, the mine of virtues and proficient in truth, O great king. Truthful and highly lustrous people practise great virtues. That Dharma we have seen in you, of a desirable form (or handsome like Cupid), satisfying (our) desires and so truth-speaking. Even with the three kinds of acts (i.e. of body, mind and speech) we are unable

to abandon you. We shall happily and agreeably go wherever you go. There is no doubt that we shall be in hell where you will stay (i.e. if you live in a hell). O very great king, without you, what is the use of a wife, or enjoyments, or life? We have nothing to do with that (i.e. wife etc.). O lord of kings, we shall go with you only; this will not be otherwise."

14-26a. Hearing these words of the subjects, the lord of the earth, full of great joy said to the subjects : "O you all very meritorious people, come along with me." With Cupid's daughter the king got into the chariot. (That) Yayāti, Nahuṣa's son, shone like Indra, the lord of gods, with the chariot having the colour of swans and resembling the orb of the moon; he was free from distress (as he was) being fanned by chowries and fans; he also shone with that lucky, auspicious and great banner. He was praised by sages, bards and singers, so also by his subjects. Then all his subjects approached the lord of men in vehicles; and they proceeded to heaven with (i.e. having mounted on) elephants and horses (and having got into) chariots. They were brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras and other common people. All they were followers of Viṣṇu and were absorbed in the meditation on Viṣṇu. Their banners were white and adorned with golden staffs. All were marked with conches and discs and were having staffs and flags. The banners urged by wind shone among the crowds of the subjects. All (the subjects) had put on divine garlands, and were adorned with Tulasī-leaves. Their bodies were smeared with divine sandal, and with (the paste of) divine black ale wood. They were adorned with divine garments and were decorated with divine ornaments. All those handsome people followed the king. All the subjects—the people numbering thousands, hundreds of lakhs and crores, and very large numbers like arva, kharva (i.e. 10,000,000,000) went (with the king). All of them, followers of Viṣṇu, doing meritorious acts, absorbed in the meditation of Viṣṇu, and in muttering (sacred names) and in charity (went) with the king.

Sukarman said :

26b-30a. Full of great joy all of them proceeded (with the king), O great king, having installed his son Pūru on his throne,

that Yayāti, the lord of the earth, went to Viṣṇu's world. Due to his lustre, religious merit and piety all those people proceeded to the best heaven of Viṣṇu. Then along with the king of gods, gods with the Gandharvas, Kinnaras and bards came facing them (to greet them), honouring that very lord of kings, O best king.

Indra said :

30b. O great king, welcome to you. Enter my house.
31a. Enjoy here all divine pleasures as you like.

The king said :

31b-40a. O you thousand-eyed, very wise god, I am saluting your lotus-like couple of feet. I (shall) then go to Brahmā's heaven.

Being praised by the gods, he went to Brahmā's heaven. The very lustrous Brahmā along with excellent sages offered him hospitable reception with water for washing his feet and with respectful offering and excellent seats; (and) said to him : "By the power of your deeds go to Viṣṇu's heaven." Thus addressed by the Creator he went to Śiva's house. Śiva, along with Umā (i.e. Pārvatī) offered hospitable reception to that very king, and said these words to the king : "O lord of kings, you are the devotee of Kṛṣṇa, you are also very dear to me; therefore, O Yayāti, lord of kings, live in my house. Enjoy all pleasures difficult to be obtained by human beings. O lord of kings, there is certainly no difference between Viṣṇu and me. There is no doubt that he who has the form of Viṣṇu is Śiva, and O king, he who is Rudra (i.e. Śiva) is the ancient Viṣṇu. There is no difference between the two. Therefore only I speak (like this). I do give a place (in my abode) to a meritorious devotee of Viṣṇu. Therefore, O innocent great king, you should stay here."

40b-43a. Thus addressed by Śiva, Yayāti, dear to Viṣṇu, and with his neck (i.e. head) bent down in devotion, saluted Śiva, the lord of gods, (and said to him :) "O great god, whatever you have said is proper. There is no difference between you two. It is one form divided into two. I desire to go (to the heaven) of Viṣṇu; I salute your feet." "O great king, let it be so; go to the heaven of Viṣṇu."

43b-65a. (Thus) instructed by Śiva also, the lord of the earth, with Viṣṇu's very meritorious devotees, dear to Viṣṇu dancing before him—the king—, proceeded (towards Viṣṇu's heaven). He, accompanied by the conch-sounds destroying great sins, and very many roars of lions, many (other) sounds, being worshipped by good bards, (his praise) being sung in melodious tones by public readers skilled in scriptures, moved (on). Gandharvas, eagerly engaged in singing, sang before him. He was being praised by sages along with hosts of gods that had joined them. That son of Nahuṣa was being served by beautiful celestial damsels. That great king, being praised by meritorious and auspicious Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Siddhas, bards, Sādhyas, Vidyādharas, Maruts and Vasus, so also Rudra and groups of Ādityas, and by the Guardians and Lords of quarters, and by all the three worlds all around, saw the matchless and trouble-free heaven of Viṣṇu. O king, that excellent and best city shone with golden, heavenly cars, full of all beauty, with hundred-storied mansions shining with halls white like swans, the *kunda* (flowers) or the moon, and resembling the Meru and Mandāra mountains which with their tops touched the heaven and the sky, and with bright, golden pitchers (on their tops). It shone with the splendour of lustre like the sky with multitudes of stars; with flames of blazing lustre it, as it were, looked with eyes. O lord of kings, that Śiva's heaven, invited, with many jewels, as it were, with teeth showing while laughing, and under the pretext of the flag with tossing foliage, the meritorious devotees of Viṣṇu, dear to Viṣṇu. It was well adorned everywhere with charming tops of banners tossed by wind, and with golden staffs and bells. It shone with gates and watch-towers looking (bright) like the sun's lustre, with beautiful round windows, rows of lattices and windows with the lustres of the broad ways, and golden ramparts, with arches, good banners and many very auspicious sounds, with the tops of pitchers, mirror-like discs resembling in lustre the sun's orb, with great splendour, with hundreds of private chambers resembling water-less clouds, crowded with staffs and umbrellas and pitchers, with chambers like clouds in the rainy season, and the earth looked, with (so many) pitchers, like the sky with stars. The city of Viṣṇu looked beautiful with the mass of staffs and banners with lustre like the multitude of stars, of the form

of crystal objects, looking like a conch or the moon, with crowds of golden palaces and (palaces) made of many metals, with divine cars numbering ten millions and thousands of hundreds of crores; and with all enjoyments. Those men, devotees of Viṣṇu, of righteous deeds and with all their sins washed away live, through his grace, in those houses, which are fully meritorious, divine and rich in all pleasures.

65b-75. The house of Viṣṇu was adorned with excellent (objects) like these. It was everywhere crowded with many kinds of trees, graced with sandal trees, having all desired fruits. It shone with wells, ponds and lakes beautified with cranes, so also with lakes, crowded with swans and ducks, beautified with white lotuses, (other) lotuses, big white lotuses, (other kinds of) lotuses and blue lotuses, and (others) having the colour of (i.e. resembling) golden lotuses. Vaikuṇṭha (i.e. Viṣṇu's heaven) was rich with all beauty, was adorned with divine parks, was full of divine charm and was graced by the devotees of Viṣṇu. The king saw (this) Vaikuṇṭha, the matchless place of salvation. Yayāti, Nahuṣa's son, entered that beautiful city, crowded with hosts of gods and free from any morbid heat. He saw that Viṣṇu, destroyer of all sufferings, free from any damage, shining with divine cars, resplendent with all ornaments, clad in a yellow garment, marked with Śrīvatsa, and very lustrous, mounted on Garuḍa accompanied by Śrī, higher than the highest, —the highest god, the refuge of all the worlds, (who) shone with perfect detachment of the form of the highest joy, and was being served by great, very meritorious devotees of Viṣṇu.

76-79. The lord of the earth, with his wife, saluted Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) crowded with hosts of gods, waited upon by groups of Gandharvas and celestial nymphs , who was magnanimous and who removed all sufferings. All the men, devotees of Viṣṇu, who had gone with the king, saluted Viṣṇu, O you very intelligent one. O you highly intelligent one, they devoutly saluted his both feet. Viṣṇu said to the glorious king, who was blazing with lustre, and who was saluting him : "O you of a good vow, I am pleased with you. O lord of kings, ask for a boon which you have in your mind; I shall certainly grant it to you. You are my devotee, O you very intelligent one."

The king said :

80. O Madhusūdana, O lord of gods, if you are pleased, then, O lord of the worlds, always grant me your servitude (i.e. make me your servant).

Viṣṇu said :

81-83. O glorious one, let it be so; you are undoubtedly my devotee; O great king, with this lady you may stay in my heaven.

That great king Yayāti, the lord of the earth, thus addressed, lived, through the grace of that god, in the excellent heaven of Viṣṇu, which was decorated.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFOUR

Glorification of Devotion to Parents

Sukarman said :

1-10. I have narrated to you this entire account, which removes sins, which emancipates sons, which is divine, and which gives great religious merit. The well-known deeds of Yayāti are actually seen in the world. Pūru obtained the great kingdom as it was brought into existence, and Turu was reduced to a bad plight, due (respectively) to the father's favour and anger. It emancipates sons, gives glory and wealth and grains. Both Turu and Yadu were under the influence of a curse. There is no other giver of desirable fruits like the father or the mother. A father may call his son through love, and a mother (may call him saying:) 'O son, O son.' Listen to its meritorious fruit. When a son, who is called by his mother, goes to her with affection, he would get the fruit of having bathed in the Ganges. A very glorious son, who would wash the feet (of his parents) enjoys, through their grace, the fruit of (having visited) all the sacred places; and by shampooing their bodies he would obtain the fruit of a

horse-sacrifice. In that son, who would nourish his father (and mother) with food, covering, and bath, merit equal to that obtained by the gift of the earth is produced. The Ganges is full of (the merit of) all sacred places. A mother is like that (only). There is no doubt about it. The ancient poets know that as the ocean is established as full of much merit, similarly is the father in this world.

Sukarman said :

11-19a. That son, who abandons or yells at his father or mother, undoubtedly goes to the hell called Raurava. That son, who, being a householder, does not support his old mother or father, goes to hell and would certainly meet with agony. For a wicked-minded and sinful son, who abuses his father (or mother), the ancient poets have never known any requital. O brāhmaṇa, knowing thus I am everyday worshipping devoutly and with my neck (i.e. head) bent my mother and father. My father, calling me, would tell me what ought and what ought not to be done. I do it with discrimination and according to my strength, O Pippala. Due to that I have obtained the highest knowledge giving me happiness. A man lives in the mundane existence due to the favour of these two (i.e. the parents). I know whatever men remaining on the earth do and when a householder proceeds to heaven. O Pippala, even while being here I know the movement of cruel persons. O best of the Vidyādharas, the three worlds have come under my sway. You should (please) worship Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu).

Viṣṇu said :

19b-21. Pippala, thus directed by him, having bowed down to the best brāhmaṇa, and also being ashamed, went to heaven in accordance with (the fruit of) his deeds. O king, that Sukarman of a religious mind, also served his father (and mother). I have thus told you everything pertaining to the holy place (in the form) of the father (and mother). O very intelligent Vena, tell me what else I should tell you.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFIVE

The Story of Cyavana : Kuñjal : Divyādevi

Vena said :

1-2. O venerable lord of gods, through your grace towards me, you have told me about the sacred place (in the form of) a wife, so also about the excellent holy place (in the form of) the father and (in the form) of the mother, giving great religious merit. Being gracious to me (now) tell me about the holy place (in the form) of the preceptor.

The Lord said :

3-10. O king, I shall tell you about the matchless holy place (in the form) of the preceptor, which is declared as the remover of all sins and the giver of happiness to the disciples, which being of the nature of ancient Dharma (i.e. religious merit) gives great virtue to the disciples, which is the highest sacred place, highest knowledge giving a visible fruit, (and) O lord of kings, by whose favour (the disciple) gets the fruit here (i.e. in this world) only; and O lord of kings, by the favour of the glorious preceptor he enjoys happiness and would obtain glory and fame in the next world. O prince, (by the preceptor's favour) the disciples actually see the three worlds along with the mobile and the immobile, so also the dealings and practices of the people. A disciple obtains wisdom and goes to salvation. As the sun illumines all the worlds, so the teacher enlightens his disciples and is the best refuge of them. O best king, the king Soma (i.e. the Moon) would shine at night only, and would keep a watch over the mobile and the immobile. O best king, a lamp would illumine a multitude (of objects) in the house, and would dispel the entire dense and impure darkness.

11-15a. O you very intelligent one, the preceptor, the light of the disciples, illumines a pupil, covered with the darkness of ignorance by means of the light of instruction. The sun shines by day, the moon at night, a lamp shines in the house, always dispelling darkness. The lamp shines at night in the house (and illumines it, but) the preceptor always enlightens the disciples. The preceptor would destroy all his darkness called ignorance.

Therefore, O lord of the earth, the preceptor is the highest holy place for the disciples. Realising this, a disciple should always worship the preceptor, full of merit, by means of three kinds of acts (i.e. bodily acts, mental acts and words).

15b-29. O brāhmaṇa, for this purpose (i.e. to illustrate this), an old account, removing all sins, is reported; it is told about the glorious Cyavana. The best sage Cyavana was born in the family of Bhārgava. O best king, once a thought arose in his (mind): 'When shall I be endowed with knowledge on the earth?' The best sage, longing for knowledge, would always think day and night. When he was thus reflecting, he had a thought: 'I shall go on a pilgrimage, giving the desired fruit.' Leaving his house and field and his wife, son and wealth, he roamed over the earth in course of a pilgrimage. O king, he went on a pilgrimage in the direction of the flow of the Ganges. Under the pretext of a pilgrimage (i.e. as a pilgrim), that lord of sages visited the holy places (on the banks) of Narmadā, Sarasvatī, and all (other) rivers like Godāvarī, and (on the shore) of the ocean and all other sacred places, so also places of deities and places having auspicious characteristics, O best king. The body of him, who was wandering over (i.e. visiting) best holy places, became pure (and lustrous) like the sun's lustre. Cyavana, with his mind purified by this act, shone with lustre. While wandering he (once) came to the best holy place on the right bank of Narmadā, called Amarakaṇṭaka. (There) he saw a great Phallus (of Śiva), giving happiness to all. Then he saluted, eulogised, and worshipped the great lord Siddhanātha, then he saw (i.e. visited) Jvāleśvara, then Amareśvara, Brahmeśa, Kapileśa and the best Mārkaṇḍeśa. Having thus finished his pilgrimage he then came to Oṃkāra. Having resorted to the cool shade of a bunyan tree, removing fatigue, the brāhmaṇa Cyavana, the son of Bhṛgu, remained there comfortably. There he then heard a note given out by a bird, which was full of divine speech and spiritual and worldly knowledge.

30-38. There was a parrot (on the tree) who lived there for a long time. His name was Kuñjala; he was religious-minded and had four sons and a wife. He had four sons who delighted their father (i.e. him). O lord of kings, I shall tell you their names: The eldest one was Ujjvala; the second was Samujjvala;

the third was Vijjvala, and the fourth was Kapiñjala. Thus, O very intelligent one, that meritorious parrot Kuñjala had four sons, who were very much devoted to their father and mother. Being disturbed and oppressed by hunger, they together roamed in the arbours of mountains and islands. O best king, they satiated the hunger in their bellies with agreeable fruits like nectar and with water sweet like nectar. The good sons gave a ripe juicy fruit to the couple (i.e. their parents), and carefully put (aside some) fruits (for them). Being contented, the glorious ones, full of devotion, procured food for their mother, (then) ate and recited. All of them engaged in sports, played and amused themselves there. Knowing (when it was) evening time they well (i.e. without fail) came to their father, after carefully having brought food for him (and their mother).

39-46a. When that noble brāhmaṇa Cyavana was watching all the (four) birds came to the very beautiful nest of their father. O you very intelligent one, they saluted both their father and mother. Having obtained food for the two (i.e. their parents), they stood by them. O king, all the best sons esteemed by their father and mother tenderly talked words full of love (to them). They also (fanned) with the cool wind from their wings their father and mother. O king, the two birds, having applauded with blessings, their good sons, nourished them. They too gave them very rich food resembling nectar. O best brāhmaṇa, the two just loved them (i.e. the sons) very much. The two, resorting to their own abode, with their minds pleased through happiness, drank pure water produced (i.e. procured) from crores of holy places, told a divine, very meritorious tale, destroying sins.

Viṣṇu said :

46b. The (eldest) son Ujjvala was (once) asked by his father Kuñjala:

47. "O my son, where had you gone today? What wonderful agreeable (event) did you see or hear there? Tell me that, my son."

48. Having heard the words of Kuñjala, his father, that Ujjvala, with his neck (i.e. head) bent down with devotion, replied:

49a. He saluted him with his head (bent down) and told him a pleasing story.

Ujjvala said :

49b-61. O you glorious one, O you very intelligent one, everyday I go to the Plakṣa island even with strenuous effort, for food. O great king, in the Plakṣa island there are many countries, mountains, rivers, parks, forests and lakes, so also villages and cities enjoyed by people. Those people are always contented, are endowed with charity, piety and muttering (of sacred hymns) and possess faith, and live happily. O great king, in the Plakṣa island lived Divodāsa, who was of a pious mind and was righteous. He had a matchless daughter, endowed with virtues and beauty, of a good character, charming and auspicious, known by the name Divyādevī and was incomparable in beauty on the earth. The father saw (i.e. noticed) her to be faring well with beauty and youth. She, the charming and auspicious one, was in the prime of youth. That Divodāsa, seeing his daughter Divyādevī, thought: 'To which noble, good groom should she be given?' (Then) the best king, having considered, thought of the king of Rūpadeśa, and the king invited him and the noble one gave his daughter to the intelligent Citrasena. O king, on the occasion of his marriage, when the right moment of the marriage came, Citrasena died due to fated time. The religious-minded king Divodāsa thought (to himself). The son of a king invited good brāhmaṇas and asked them: "At the time of her marriage Citrasena expired. Tell me what her fate will be."

The brāhmaṇas said :

62-66a. O king, the marriage of an unmarried daughter is seen to be performed according to the sacred injunctions. Her husband may die; if not, he will have union with her; (but) being stricken with great malady or physical disease he may abandon her and go; or he may become a recluse. This is what is seen in the religious works. Wise men get married their unmarried daughter(s). As long as she does not menstruate (i.e. does not attain puberty), another groom is enjoined for her. The father should certainly get her married according to the sacred injunc-

tions. Thus, O king, the wise men have stated the sacred rules. Get her married.

Thus told the best brāhmaṇas.

Ujjvala said :

66b-70. Virtuous Divodāsa, the great king, prompted by the words of the brāhmaṇas, made preparations for the (his daughter's) marriage, O king. O best brāhmaṇa, he gave away Divyādevī (in marriage) to that virtuous and glorious king, Rūpasena. At the (time of) the marriage the lord of the earth (i.e. Rūpasena) died. Whenever Divyādavī (was married) her husband, a king, invariably died when the proper time for marriage had arrived. O father, twentyone husbands died (like this) time after time. Then the king (Divodāsa) of a well-known valour became very unhappy.

71-76. Having thought (this) over, the lord of the earth, called his ministers, and having held consultations with them, decided (to arrange) a self-choice marriage (for her). The glorious one invited the kings of Plakṣadvīpa. Those kings, who were greatly devoted to religion, who were invited to the self-choice marriage, being deluded by her beauty and prompted by death, foolishly fought (among themselves) and died on the battlefield. Thus O father, there was the destruction of the noble kṣatriyas. Divyādevī, being very much afflicted with grief, went to a cave in the forest. That virtuous young maiden Divyādevi wept piteously. O father, thus I witnessed (this) wonderful sight there. Then, O father, tell me its cause in detail.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSIX

Divyādevī As Citrā in Her Former Birth

Kuñjala said :

1. O boy, I (shall) tell you all the acts of that Divyādevī. Listen to all that she did in the former birth as I am telling you.

2-7a. There was an auspicious city named Vārāṇasī, the destroyer of sins. In it lived a very intelligent man named Suvīra, who was born in the Vaiśya caste and who possessed wealth and grains. O you very intelligent one, his wife was Citrā by name, who was well known. She, abandoning the family-practices, behaved improperly. She did not care for her husband, (and) behaved wantonly. Bereft of piety and merit she would act (i.e. she acted) sinfully only. She always reviled her husband, and always loved quarrelling. She always stayed in the house of another (person), and wandered from house to house. She would observe (i.e. she observed) the weak points of others, and was always wicked to beings. She was very much given to condemning the good, and always laughed.

7b-9a. Knowing her to be of an improper conduct and very sinful, Vīra reproached her. O you very intelligent one, that pious, highly intelligent (Vīra) of truthful and religious thoughts, abandoned her and married another Vaiśya's daughter; and stayed with her righteously.

9b-14. That bold Citrā, expelled by him, roamed over the earth. She became associated with wicked and sinful men. She of a wicked determination, worked as a go-between. The sinful one split the houses (i.e. families) of the good. She would call a chaste woman and would induce her with evil words. She violated customary observances. With convincing (but) evil words that Citrā would present the wife (the wives) of good men to someone else. Thus Citrā certainly split a hundred houses. The very wicked one created quarrels between husbands and sons. The sinful one would stir the minds of men for (i.e. make them sexually disposed to) women. She set up a quarrel making Yama thrive.

15-20. Thus having split a hundred houses (i.e. families), she then died. O good son, she was punished by king Yama with a heavy penalty. The Sun's son (i.e. Yama) threw her into many hells (like Raurava). Citrā was roasted in Raurava. Various afflictions were shown (i.e. imposed on her). As a deed is done so it (i.e. its fruit) is enjoyed. Due to a wicked resolve that Citrā split a hundred houses. O best brāhmaṇa, she experienced the fruit of the respective deeds. Since she split a hundred houses, therefore she is experiencing grief. When the time of (her) marriage came, her destiny had become ripe. When the proper

time (for) her marriage came, her husband died. As she split a hundred houses, a hundred grooms died at the time of the self-choice marriage and twentyone (grooms died) at the time of (her proposed marriage).

21. As you asked me I have told you (the account) of Divyādevī. I have told you all these—her former deeds.

Ujjvala said :

22. You first told me the former deeds of Divyādevī, so also the fierce sin called splitting the houses (that she committed).

23. Due to the prowess of which religious merit did that daughter of Divodāsa, the king of the Plakṣa island, obtain (a birth) in a great family?

24. This is my doubt, O father. Please tell it to me. How did the princess become (a woman) of such a sinful behaviour?

Kuñjala said :

25. I shall (now) tell you about all the pious acts of Citrā. O (my) son Ujjvala, listen to what Citrā did formerly.

26-30. A very wise Siddha (i.e. a man endowed with super-natural faculties), while wandering came to the door of Citrā's house. He wore tattered clothes, was without a (proper) garment, was a recluse, and had held a staff (in his hand). He had a small strip of cloth worn over his privities, had a pot in his hand and was (otherwise) naked. Having come to the door of Citrā's house, he remained there. He observed a vow of silence, was clean-shaved, had his mind and organs of sense conquered. He abstained from food, took a very small quantity, and knew the essence of everything. He was very much tired due to having been on a long journey, and his mind was distressed with heat; O good son, he was depressed with fatigue, and was overcome with thirst. Having come to the door of Citrā's house, he resorted to the shade (of a tree). The noble one, afflicted with fatigue, was seen by Citrā.

31-35. Citrā served that very noble one, by washing his feet and giving him an excellent seat. "Sir, be seated comfortably on a very soft seat. Eat excellent food to remove (i.e. satiate) your hunger. Being contented drink cold water as you like." Saying so, and doing like that (i.e. giving him food etc.), and worshipping

him like a deity, she, O son, massaged his body and removed his fatigue. The noble Siddha, thus addressed by her, ate (food) and drank (water), O best brāhmaṇa. The Siddha, who knew the essence of everything, thus pleased by her, was gratified, and he, the soul of entire piety, remained steady for a while. That great meditating saint went (away) according to his will, as he had come.

36-44. When that noble and glorious Siddha had left, Citrā met with death, being under the sway of (i.e. according to) her deeds. She was punished by Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) with very painful penalties. That Citrā reached hell causing a host of agonies. O great king, (there) she experienced misery for a thousand yugas. At the end of (i.e. after having) experienced (misery) she got the birth of (i.e. was born as) a human being. She had formerly worshipped the Siddha, the best among the meritorious. It is the ripening (i.e. the fruit) of her deeds that she came to (i.e. was born in) the house of Divodāsa, the great king, (and) in the family of meritorious Kṣatriyas. O best man, she got the name Divyādevī; and she had given good food and drink to the noble one. She enjoyed the meritorious consequence of the great righteous act of charity. She drank cold water, and ate dainty food. Enjoying divine pleasures, she lived in her father's house; and due to the power of this Siddha, she was born as a princess. O good son, due to the efficacy of her great sin of splitting the families, O king, that Divyādevī experienced widowhood.

45. I have thus told you all the deeds of Divyādevī. What else, which you ask me now, should I tell you?

Ujjvala said :

46-48. Tell me how she got free from grief and great affliction. What kind of young woman was she, who was afflicted with great grief? What kind of happiness did she have? What will be its consequence? O father, please remove this doubt of mine now. Tell me (about) the means by which she will obtain salvation. The noble one is all alone weeping in the great forest.

Viṣṇu said :

49-60. Having heard (those) great (i.e. important) words

of his son, and having thought for a moment, that very wise Kuñjala replied to his son: "O my noble son, listen; I am telling you the truth. Having reached (i.e. being born in) a sinful stock, due to my former deeds, and due to the contact with this tree, the knowledge of me, who was pious and noble, has now been lost in this existence of a lower animal, O son. I shall tell you about that instruction by which, and through the favour of Revā and grace of Viṣṇu, she has obtained knowledge and has reached salvation; being free from blemish, she will go to salvation, as gold becomes pure due to the contact with fire and gets (back) its own nature. O very intelligent one, due to the meditation on Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) and due to the muttering (of prayers), sacrifices and vows the sin of the sinners perishes. As an elephant would always give up his intoxication due to the fear of a lion, so the sin goes away due to the recitation of the names of Viṣṇu. As the serpents become poisonless due to the lustre of (Garuḍa) the son of Vinatā, so all sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa perish; and in no other way. They too go away due to the recitation of the names of Viṣṇu. When being steady, and free from lust and anger, she would mutter the hundred names, destroying heaps of sins, and when, having controlled all the organs of sense, would guard them through the knowledge of self, and when, having entered into his meditation, having become one with (i.e. having become sincerely devoted to) him, and being composed, she would mutter (the names of Viṣṇu) she would reach (i.e. obtain) highest knowledge and salvation. When she would be endowed with abstract meditation, and when she would set her heart upon him, she would be completely resting at his feet."

Ujjvala said :

61. O father, right now tell me about the great, highest knowledge; and after that the vow of meditation and the auspicious hundred names.

Kuñjala said :

62. I shall explain to you the highest knowledge, which nobody has perceived (i.e. acquired). O son, listen to (the description of) the perfect final emancipation, free from impurity.

Sūta said:

63-69a. O highly intelligent one, as a lamp in a place sheltered from wind, is steady (as it is) free from wind, burning brightly, (and) would destroy all darkness, in the same way the soul, free from blemishes, remains alone, free from desires, pure, and O son, he is never a friend or a foe. (He has) neither grief nor joy; (he has) neither greed nor jealousy. Being all alone, he is free from dejection, joy, happiness and unhappiness; so also free from all the objects of sense, (when) he would withdraw his organs of sense (from the objects). Then he has become absolute and salvation takes place (in his case). O lord of kings, a lamp, without any company (i.e. being solitary), and free from wind, would, through the contact of the movement of fire, dry up the oil due to the support of the wick. Then it emits soot, and on the top of the lamp a dark line of (i.e. due to) the oil is seen, O you very intelligent one. It itself draws oil and becomes spotless by means of the oil.

69b-72a. In the same way he (i.e. the soul) remains in the wick of the body and would draw the oil of the deeds; and would himself shine with lustre. Being free from anger etc. and winds called troubles, so also being desireless and steady he would glow with lustre. Remaining in his own place, he sees all the three worlds by means of his lustre.

72b-84. I have told (i.e. described to) you this (soul), of the nature of absolute knowledge. I shall (now) explain to you the meditation upon the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu); he is seen with the eye of knowledge, of the nature of absolute knowledge. Whom (i.e. him) the noble ones, intent upon (obtaining) the highest object (i.e. salvation), and having abstract meditation, and being watchful, see. His penance (i.e. penance practised to reach him) manifests everything. Being without hands and feet, he moves everywhere. O son, he captures (i.e. pervades) all the three worlds—mobile and immobile. O son, (even being) without nose and mouth, he smells and eats. He, the witness (to everything), the lord of the world, (even though) without ears, hears everything. (Though) without a form he is connected with forms and is under the sway of the group of five (organs of sense). Who (i.e. he) is the life of the entire world, and is worshipped by the

mobile and the immobile. O son, (though) tongue-less, he recites everything according to the Vedic texts. For him, who is without skin, touch of all objects is produced (i.e. he can touch everything). He is ever joyful, is detached, has one form (only), is independent, is without old age, without the feeling of mineness, just, possessing qualities, without the feeling of mineness, and pure. He is not under the control of anyone, (but) everything is under his control; he is the giver of everything and the best among the omniscient ones. He has no supporter; he, the eternal one, is full of everything. He who thus observes everything as full of meditation of the noble one, goes to the incorporeal, highest place, resembling nectar. I shall explain to you another meditation of this noble one. It is having a form, corporeal, formless and sound. O my son, he is called Vāsudeva since the entire matchless universe is occupied by him. His colour would be (i.e. is) that which is of the showering cloud. He, the lord of gods, resembles the sun's lustre and has four arms.

85-95. In his right hand shines a conch decorated with gold and jewels, and the disc resembling the sun's orb and a lotus are (held) in it. O boy, the mace Kaumodakī, destroying great demons, shines in the left hand of the illustrious one. A big lotus, rich with fragrance is (held) in his right hand. He, dear to Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī) always shines with weapons. (A man should meditate upon) Viṣṇu (whose) neck is like a conch, face is round, and eyes resemble lotus-leaves, who shines with teeth resembling jewels. His hair is (flowing) like treacle, and the lips have the form of a coral. O son, he having the eyes like lotuses, shines with a crown. Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) shines with a glorious form and great lustre and is marked with the Kaustubha gem. Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) shines with ear-rings resembling the sun's lustre and always shines with the auspicious mark of Śrīvatsa. Vijaya, the best among the victorious, shines with a body having armlets, bracelets, necklaces and pearls resembling stars. That Govinda also shines with a golden-coloured garment and with fingers with rings and gems. The creator of the worlds, the lord of the worlds (i.e. Viṣṇu), (shining with) all complete weapons and divine ornaments, is mounted upon Garuḍa. A man who thus meditates upon him with a concentrated mind is free from all sins, and goes to Viṣṇu's world.

96. I have thus told you everything about the meditation upon the lord of the world. I shall now tell you (about) the vow, destroying all sins.

CHAPTER EIGTHYSEVEN

'A Hundred Names of Viṣṇu'

Kuñjala said :

1-4. I shall explain to you the kinds of vows by which Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) is propitiated. O good son, there are many kinds of Ekādaśī: Jayā, Vijayā, and Jayantī, Pāpanāśinī, Trispṛśā, Vañjulī; the next is Tiladagdhā, then the other one is Akhaṇḍā, Cārakanyā, and Manorathā. There is (the vow of) Aśūnya-śayana (i.e. not sleeping on a bed), and there is the great vow of Janmāṣṭamī. There is no doubt that the sin of beings goes away due to these very auspicious vows. I am telling you the truth (and) the truth (only).

Kuñjala said :

5-9. I shall tell you about his hymn, destroying a heap of sins, called 'Suputra-śata', and giving salvation to men. I shall now only tell you about the hymn of that god Kṛṣṇa, which is excellent and is called 'Śatanāma'. O best son, listen to it. I shall tell you the sage of (i.e. the composer of), and the metre of the hundred names of Viṣṇu. I shall also tell you about the deity, purifying all sins, O glorious one. Brahmā is said to be the sage (i.e. the author) of the hundred names of Viṣṇu. Oṃkāra is declared to be the deity, and anuṣṭubh is (said to be) the metre. It leads to the acquisition (i.e. fulfilment) of all desires and is employed in (obtaining) salvation. Of this hymn of the hundred names of Viṣṇu, Brahmā is the sage, Viṣṇu the deity, anuṣṭubh the metre. It is used for the fulfilment of all desires and for the destruction of all sins.

10-24. "I salute Hṛṣīkeśa, Keśava, Madhusūdana, the killer of all demons, sound Nārāyaṇa, Jayanta, Vijaya, Kṛṣṇa, Ananta,

Vāmana, Viṣṇu, the auspicious lord of the universe, the prop of the universe, worshipped by gods, sinless, destroyer of sins, Narasiṃha and dear to Śrī, lord of Lakṣmī, Śrīdhara (possessing glory of Lakṣmī), giver of wealth, Śrīnivāsa (i.e. abode of Lakṣmi), and very prosperous, Śrī Rāma, Mādhava, Mokṣa (i.e. Salvation), of the nature of forgiveness, Janārdana, omniscient, knowing and giving everything, the leader of all, Hari, Murāri, Govinda, Padmanābha, the lord of beings, giver of joy, endowed with knowledge, giver of knowledge, master of knowledge; Acyuta, possessing power, the moon, holding a disc in his hand, higher and lower, the support of the yugas, the source of the world, of the nature of Brahman, the great lord, Mukunda, good (i.e. great) Vaikuṇṭha (i.e. Viṣṇu), of one form, the lord of the world, glorious Vāsudeva, holy and dear to brāhmaṇas, loving and beneficial to the cows, sacrifice, constituent of the sacrifice, causing sacrifice to prosper, a good enjoyer of sacrifice, master of Vedas and Vedāṅgas; knower of the Vedas, of the form of the Vedas, abode of learning and lord of gods, the unmanifest one, a great Brahman, having a conch in his hand, the ancient man, lotus-eyed, (of the form of) Varāha (i.e. a boar), supporting the earth, Pradyumna, Kāmapāla, Vyāsa, Vyāla, and Maheśvara (i.e. the great lord), (full of) all pleasures (and) great pleasures, salvation and the highest lord, of the form of Yoga (i.e. abstract meditation), of great knowledge, giving salvation to the meditating saints and dear to them; the enemy of Mura, the protector of the world, the one having a lotus in his hand, and holding a mace, living in a cave, living everywhere, of an auspicious abode, and possessing large arms, lord of Vṛndā, of a huge body, purifier and destroyer of sins, lord of the gopīs (i.e. the cowherdesses), the friend of the cowherds, the protector of cows, the refuge of the herds of cattle, the highest soul, the highest lord, Kapila and having human activities, steady and eternal—I salute him with my mind, speech and bodily acts." He, doer of virtuous acts, who, even with (these) hundred names, praises, with a steady mind, Kṛṣṇa, (he) being purified by religious merit here (i.e. in this world), leaving (other) worlds, goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

25-27. A man should mutter with a concentrated mind, the very meritorious hundred names, cleansing all sins, and should meditate upon them with abstract contemplation. Such a man

would always obtain the fruit of having a bath in the Ganges with religious merit. Therefore a man should be very steady and mutter (these names) with a composed mind. A restrained man, being devoted, should mutter (these names) three times (a day). There is no doubt that for him there is (i.e. he gets) the fruit of (having performed) a hundred horse-sacrifices.

28-32a. I shall tell (you) about the religious merit of the man, who having fasted on the Ekādaśī day in front of Viṣṇu and (keeping) awake, would, mutter these names: The man obtains the fruit of Puṇḍarīka sacrifice (i.e. offered in honour of Viṣṇu). A man, who, remaining near Tulasī, would mentally mutter (these names) obtains the fruit of the Rājasūya sacrifice even after a year. One desiring happiness should mutter (these names) near the two (viz. at a place) where there is the Śālagrāma stone and the Dvārāvatī stone. A man (who does this) having enjoyed many pleasures and a hundred families would emancipate more than one along with him.

32b-39. He who would bathe (every morning) in Kārtika and would worship Viṣṇu, and also he, who, being purified, would recite the hymn (in honour of Viṣṇu) goes to (i.e. obtains) a superior position. The man, who bathes every morning in Māgha, having worshipped with devotion, Viṣṇu, the killer of (the demon) Madhu, and would meditate upon Hṛṣīkeśa (i.e. Viṣṇu), or would mutter (his names) or listens to them (being recited), and, giving up sinful (deeds) like drinking liquor, goes, without any difficulty, to Janārdana, O (my) son. The dead ancestors of the man, who at the time of a Śrāddha, would mutter the hymn (containing) the hundred names destroying sins, in front of the brāhmaṇas eating (food), become pleased, and being gratified obtain salvation. A brāhmaṇa who always mutters it, becomes learned in the Vedas; a kṣatriya, (who always mutters it) obtains (i.e. rules over) the earth; a vaiśya (who always mutters it) would enjoy wealth and prosperity; a śūdra (who always mutters it) enjoys happiness and obtains brāhmaṇahood after getting another (i.e. next) existence and obtains (mastery over) the Vedic lore. This hymn, giving happiness and salvation should always be muttered. There is no doubt that due to the grace of Viṣṇu a man would be equipped with everything.

CHAPTER EIGHTYEIGHT

Divyādevī Goes to Viṣṇu's Heaven

Kuñjala said :

1-4a. O good son, I have told you the vow, the hymn, the great knowledge and the meditation of Viṣṇu which destroy sins. When she (i.e. Divyādevī) would practise these auspicious four, she will go to Viṣṇu's world, difficult to be obtained even by gods. O child, going from here, teach the vow to Divyādevī. Tell (i.e. teach) her the king of vows called Aśūnya-śayana. Emanicipate the glorious princess from a great sin. You asked me (and therefore) I told (you about the vow) giving religious merit and destroying sins. O glorious one, go, (do) go.

Saying so, he ceased (to speak).

Śrī Viṣṇu said :

4b-10. That religious-minded and very intelligent Ujjvala, thus addressed by his father, having saluted the feet of his mother and father, quickly went to Plakṣadvīpa. He went to that mountain, auspicious on all sides, full of various minerals, and adorned with lofty peaks full of many kinds of jewels. O king, there were rivers with clean water flowing in many streams on that excellent mountain. O king, Kinnaras and Gandharvas sang there melodiously. It was crowded with the celestial nymphs; it was filled with hosts of gods; it was ringing with Siddhas and Cāraṇas; it was adorned with groups of sages. It was everywhere resounding with the notes of various birds.

11-13. The bright and quick-footed one thus reached that mountain. That woman also was weeping melodiously on that mountain. The wise one said (these) words to her who was again and again weeping. "O auspicious one, who are you? Why are you weeping now? Whom had you resorted to? Who has harmed you? Today only tell me the entire cause of your grief."

Divyādevī said :

14-18. O glorious one, it is properly the fruit of my deeds.

Being widowed I am staying here unhappily. O you illustrious one, who are you, afflicted by my grief?

O child, he, who had taken the form of a bird, having heard all that the princess had said, spoke enthusiastically, O child: "O glorious one, I am a bird, afflicted by your grief. I have taken the form of a bird, (but) I am neither a Siddha, nor a wise person. I saw you weeping here very loudly; therefore, O respectable lady, I am asking you. Tell me its cause, what happened in your father's house, and your own account."

19-24a. In brief and in proper order, she told everything that pained her. Having heard that, that large-hearted, great bird Ujjvala said to that Divyādevī who was very much pained: "At the time of your marriage your grooms died, the kṣatriyas also perished due to your self-choice marriage. O you lady of beautiful eyes, through compassion for you, my father told me the sinful deeds you had done in the other (i.e. former) existence. O you beautiful lady, strengthened by that blemish you are covered with that. Eat the fruit of the deeds you did in the previous birth. Be composed."

24b-27. That young humble lady, having heard those words of Ujjvala, replied to that magnanimous bird, who (thus) spoke (in human voice) in piteous words: "O bird, favour me. With (i.e. showing) grace, tell (me about) the atonement of that sin; also (tell me about) the expiation which will purify my sins, by which, being pure due to my sins washed, I shall go to a holy (place). Be gracious, and tell me about the expiation, O you glorious one."

Ujjvala said :

28-31. O you glorious one, for you only I asked my father. Then my father told (me) about the matchless expiation. O you illustrious one, you do that which would purify all your sins. Meditate upon Hṛṣīkeśa (i.e. Viṣṇu), mutter his hundred names. Be intent upon (obtaining) knowledge. Always practise the excellent, holy vow (called) 'Aśūnyaśayana' which destroys sins.

The religious-minded one explained to her knowledge, hymn, vow of and meditation upon the noble Viṣṇu, which reveals all knowledge.

Viṣṇu said :

32-35. Remaining in the solitary forest, she took it from him. She became free from all pairs of opposites and remained in penance. O great king, controlling her food, helpless and very much afflicted, free from lust and anger, and always controlling the group of the organs of sense and having abandoned great delusion, she practised the vow. When the fourth year came, the excellent lord Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) who was very much pleased came there with a desire to grant her a boon. The lord, the giver of boons, manifested his form to her.

Sūta said :

36-42a. She, joining the palms of her hands, trembling and helpless, spoke in a faltering tone, after saluting Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), the great lord, dark-green like a sapphire and a cloud, holding a conch, a disc and a mace, rich with charm due to all ornaments, having a lotus in his hand: "I am not at all able to stand your divine lustre. Be gracious and please tell me who you, of a divine form, are and what is the cause (of) your (coming over) here? With favour (i.e. favour me) and tell me everything, O highly intelligent one. Due to your lustre and gestures I know (i.e. I think) you are just a god. O lord of the world, I, who am ignorant, do not know your form and name. Are you Brahmā, or Viṣṇu or Śaṅkara himself?" Speaking like this, and bowing to him she fell (i.e. prostrated herself) on the ground like a staff. Viṣṇu spoke to that princess who had bent before him.

The lord said :

42b-46a. O you auspicious one, there is no difference among the three. O you beautiful lady, I am always worshipped by him who has worshipped Brahmā or Śaṅkara. No doubt should be raised about it. These two are not different from me. I always have these three forms. Those who worship me, worship well these two. I am god Viṣṇu, who has come here through pity for you and due to the hymn and this auspicious vow and your restraint. You have become free from blemishes. O you auspicious one, ask for a boon.

Divyādevī said :

46b-49a. O Viṣṇu, O Kṛṣṇa the remover of affliction, be victorious. I am saluting your couple of feet. O lord of gods, emancipate me. O you having the disc in your hand, you desire to grant me a boon. Be gracious to me. O you sinless one, give (i.e. create in) me devotion for the couple of your feet. O lord of the world, show (me) the sound path to salvation. If, O Janārdana, you are pleased, give me the status of your servant (i.e. make me your servant).

The Lord said :

49b-54. O you noble one, let it be so. Go, with your sins completely washed, to Viṣṇu's highest heaven, always difficult to be obtained (even) by meditating saints. Now, due to my grace, do go to the highest world.

When the magnanimous Viṣṇu uttered these words, Divyādevī became divine with her lustre resembling that of the sun. She, adorned with divine ornaments, with a divine garland, a divine necklace, went, when all the people were watching, to Viṣṇu's heaven, free from tormentation and destruction. The bird, full of joy, again came home. The best one told all that to his father.

CHAPTER EIGHTYNINE

The Miraculous Bath in the Water of Mānasa Lake

Viṣṇu said :

1-3a. Then Kuñjala said (these) words to his very bright son : "O son, tell me what you saw earlier. Tell me that. I am now very much pleased to listen to it." Thus ordering his son, that Kuñjala ceased speaking. The son, bending with modesty replied to the father:

Samujjvala said :

3b-14. O father, for your and my food, I go to Himālaya,

the best mountain, attended by hosts of gods. I saw a wonder there, not seen or heard of before. (I saw) a region crowded with groups of sages, adorned with celestial nymphs, rich in many beautiful things creating curiosity, auspicious, and endowed with auspicious things, attracting the mind with many curious things, full of many auspicious fruits. There, near the Mānasa (lake), O father, I saw a wonderful thing. A swan accompanied by many swans came there. In the same way, O glorious one, other black swans with white beaks and feet (also) came there. At other places their bodies were white (i.e. other parts of their bodies were white). They were black like that, and, O you very intelligent one, others were white. There were four females of formidable figures and fearful, fierce and cruel due to their fangs, with their hair erect and causing fear. Later they also came there to that Mānasa lake. O father, in front of me the black swans bathed in the Mānasa (lake). Others roamed around; they did not bathe there in the Mānasa (lake). Later the females also came there to that Mānasa (lake). O father, the women laughed loudly and fiercely. From that lake a swan of a huge body came out. Then three went out; they neglected the swan. Discussing with each other, they went along the aerial path. Those very fearful women wandered on all sides.

15-19a. All the birds, afflicted with great agonies, sat in the shades of trees on the auspicious peak of Vindhya. When they were well (i.e. minutely) watching there came a bhilla, holding a bow and with an arrow in his hand, after having harassed beasts. Resorting to a slab, he sat there happily. Then the female bhilla (the wife of that bhilla) came there carrying (i.e. with) food and water. She saw her husband endowed with superior marks of kings. Knowing (i.e. taking) her husband covered with lustre, full of divine lustre, like the sun remaining in the sky, to be someone else, she left him and went (i.e. started going).

The hunter said :

19b-22. O darling, come, come on, why do you not look at me? I, who am being tormented by hunger, am waiting for you.

Hearing his words, the female hunter came (there) quickly. Reaching the vicinity of her husband, she wondered : 'Who

this lustrous god may be that is calling me?' Then the female hunter said to her husband of a blazing lustre : "O hero, what have you to do here? Who are you, having divine marks?'

Sūta said :

23. The hunter, thus addressed by the female hunter said to his wife : "O dear one, I am your husband, and you are my wife.

24. How do you not recognise me? Why is there a doubt (in your mind)? One who is oppressed by hunger expects water and food."

The female hunter said :

25-29. My husband is a barbarian, of a dark complexion and has put on a black dress. Such is my husband who causes fear to all beings. Who are you of a divine body, who would call (i.e. who addressed) me 'O dear one'? This is my doubt; tell me the truth.

For convincing his wife he told her (about) his family, his (native) village, his sports, his distinguishing mark, his son, his daughter. That female hunter, with her heart pleased said to her husband : "Due to what has your body become like this? Why have you put on a white dress? Tell me (about it). I am wondering." Hearing these words, the hunter, who was thus asked by his wife, full of respect (for him), replied to her:

Sūta said :

30-35a. "O you of a good vow, there is a confluence on the northern bank of Narmadā. O you very dear one, I, who was fatigued, quickly went to this (place of) confluence. I bathed (there), drank water, and have (now) come (here). Since then my body is covered with lustre like this. I became (fully) clad, and my garment turned white." By the marks, figure, family, place she recognised her husband, and having realised the possibility of religious merit, she then said to him : "Show me the (place of) confluence (first). I shall afterwards give you food with drink."

35b-42a. Thus addressed by his wife, the hunter quickly went (there); he subsequently showed her the confluence, the destroyer of sins. "O noble one, the birds of quick steps flew, and with her went to that excellent confluence of Revā. While birds and I were watching, she gave a bath to her husband, and she herself took a bath. Both turned (to be persons) possessing divine bodies and endowed with divine beauty, clad in divine garments, and (smeared) with (divine) unguents, having divine garlands, and smeared with divine sandal, O best of birds. Having got into Viṣṇu's vehicle, the two, worshipped by sages and Gandharvas, and honoured by Viṣṇu's devotees, went to Viṣṇu's heaven. I saw the noble couple being praised, and going along the heavenly path. Seeing the excellent best holy place, the birds also warbled with clear notes due to joy.

42b-50. The four black swans, having bathed at the confluence destroying sins, and with their hearts purified, again became bright. Having bathed and drunk water they again went out. All those black females died just due to that bath. O father, crying and moving, trembling with grief they went to Yama's world. I saw them then. Then the swans flew and went to their abode. O father, I actually saw this, and told it to you. O father, please tell me what those females with black sides and huge bodies will be (turned into). Tell me about the geese with black legs and bills, who went out of the Mānasa (lake). Tell it to me, O father, what they will be (i.e. turn into). How again, had the (white) swans become black? How did they become white again (just) at that moment only? O father, why did those females die? Such a doubt has arisen in my mind. Being favourable to me, you, who are clear-sighted, please remove, today only, the doubt of me who am always humble."

51. Speaking thus to his father, Samujjvala (or Ujjvala) ceased speaking. Then that parrot, named Kuñjala, started speaking.

CHAPTER NINETY

The Powers of the Holy Places

Sūta said :

1. Having heard all that Samujjvala said, that pious Kuñjala said in reply :

Kuñjala said :

2-7. O dear one, I shall explain it to you. Listen with a steady (i.e. attentive) mind to the account removing all doubts and destroying sins. In the assembly of that noble god Indra a debate, producing curiosity, was going on. (At that time) Nārada hurriedly came to see Indra. Indra, having seen him, with lustre like that of the sun, who had arrived, became glad and the very intelligent one, with his mind humble through devotion, offered him material of worship and water for washing his feet. Joining the palms of his hands, he saluted him. Seating the best brāhmaṇa on an auspicious, soft seat, and bowing down, he, full of great reverence, asked him : "Tell me now the reason for your arrival today."

8-10a. Thus addressed by the lord of gods, the great sage said : "Having bathed in holy regions and sacred places with great faith, having worshipped deities and dead ancestors, having seen many holy places, I have come, from the earth, to see you, O Indra. I have already told all this which you had formerly asked me."

The Lord of gods said :

10b-12a. O sage, you have seen auspicious, holy places and good regions. By visiting which sacred place, would a killer of a brāhmaṇa be free from (the sin of) murdering a brāhmaṇa, (or) a drunkard, or a killer of a cow, or one stealing gold, (would be free from the sin), (or) O illustrious one, how would one be free from plotting against one's master? (Or) how would the killer of a woman be happy?

Nārada said :

12b-23. O lord of gods, I do not know the speciality, regarding the destruction of sin, of such holy places as Gaṅgā etc. O Indra, I know that all great holy places are very auspicious and divine. But I do not know properly their special properties and lack of them. O god, ascertain the power of the holy places of giving salvation.

Having heard those words of that magnanimous Nārada, Indra called the Holy Places residing on the earth. By his order, all the Holy Places—divine ones—came there in embodied forms. O you of a good vow, the divine ones had joined the palms of their hands; they were adorned with good ornaments; their garments were divine, glossy and bright. They had especially taken up the form of women and men. They resembled gold and sandal, and had put on divine forms. O lord of men, they shone with the colour of pearls. Some of them had the complexion of heated gold and some were tawny. Some in the assembly were white and very yellow and bright. Some of the embodied ones resembled lotuses; still others resembled the sun's lustre, (or) the lustre (i.e. flash) of lightning; others shone in the assembly like fire. O lord of men, they shone with the richness of all ornaments, with necklaces, bracelets, armlets, garlands and good sandal. They, (with their bodies) smeared with divine sandal, fragrant and great, and with water-pots in their hands came into the assembly.

24-37. Gaṅgā, Narmadā, the holy Candrabhāgā, Sarasvatī, Devikā, Bimbikā, Kubjā, Kuñjalā, the well-known Mañjulā, Rambhā, the extremely holy Bhānumatī, Sugharghara, Śoṇā, Sindhu, Sauvirā, Kāverī, so also Kapilā, and Kumudā, the holy Vedanadī, the very holy Maheśvarī and the well-known Carmaṇvatī, Lopā and Sukauśikī, Suhaṃsī, Haṃsapādā, Haṃsavegā and Manorathā, Suruthā, Svāruṇā, Veṇā, Bhadraveṇā, Supadminī, Nāharī, Sumarī, the holy Pulindikā, Hemā, Manorathā, Divyā, Candrikā, Vedasaṃkramā, Jvālā, Hutāśanī, Svāhā, Kālā and Kampiñjalā, Svadhā and Sukalā, Liṅgā, Gambhīrā, Bhīmavāhinī, Devadrīcī, Vīravāhā, Lakṣahomā, Aghāpahā, Pārāśarī, Hemagarbhā, Subhadrā, Vasuputrikā—these very holy rivers, rich with the beauty of all ornaments, with pitchers

in their hands, and well-honoured came there in embodied forms, O lord of men. Prayāga, Puṣkara, Arghadīrghā, Manorathā, the very holy Vārāṇasī, removing (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, Dvārāvatī, Prabhāsa, and Avantī and Nimiṣa and Caṇḍaka, Mahāratna and Maheśvara and Kaleśvara, Kaliñjara, Brahmakṣetra, Māthura, Mānavāhaka, Māyā, Kāntī and other many very holy and divine places—sixty-eight in number—so also hundreds of crores of all rivers, led by Godāvarī came there by his (i.e. Indra's) order. All regions, very holy and great holy places, possessing bodies and marks came to Indra, the lord of gods; came there, obeying his order. With their heads bent down, they all saluted the lord of gods.

Sūta said :

38-47. The great Holy Places said to the victorious lord of gods : "O god of gods, tell us why you have called us. O lord of gods, tell us all the reason; salutation to you." Hearing these words of them, the lord of gods said : "Which holy place is able to remove (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa? Which holy place is able to destroy the great sin called the murder of a cow, or the matchless sin called the murder of a woman or the great sin due to plotting against one's master or the elders, or drinking liquor, or due to the terrible (sin of) causing abortion. (Which holy place is able to destroy) the great sin, giving great trouble, due to plotting against the king, (or) against (one's) friend, or any other sin of treachery, (or) changing the deity, (or) means of livelihood of brāhmaṇas, (or) destroying the pasture-ground of cows, or burning a dwelling or setting ablaze a house? These sixteen are major sins, so also illicit intercourse. Which best holy place would be able to destroy sins (like the sin) due to deserting one's master, or due to running away from the battle-field? From amongst you which one would certainly be able (to destroy a sin) without expiation? When all gods and Nārada are watching (i.e. in the presence of all gods and Nārada) may all of you speak after having properly decided."

48. When the magnanimous king of gods spoke like this, the Holy Places, after having consulted their lord, spoke to Indra, present in the assembly.

The Holy Places said :

49-54. Listen, we shall tell (it). O lord of gods, salutation to you. All holy places destroy sins; but, O Lord of gods, we are not able to destroy the very fearful and strong sins which you mentioned. Prayāga, Puṣkara, the matchless Aghatīrtha, and, O noble one, Vārāṇasī—(each one of these) is able to destroy sins. To destroy major sins these four are of unlimited power; so also they have unlimited power to destroy minor sins. O lord of gods, the very powerful Puṣkara and others have been created by the Creator.

Having heard these words of the Holy Places, the lord of gods, full of great joy, then praised them.

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THE PADMA-PURĀṆA

PART IV

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY
Dr. N.A. DESHPANDE

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

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PREFACE

In this IV part of the *Padma Purāṇa* are included the remaining chapters, 91-125, of the second section, *Bhūmikhaṇḍa*, and the whole of the third section, *Svargakhaṇḍa*, having 62 chapters in all.

Our observation that the names of the sections have little relevance to the contents is further corroborated in this part. One may look, for example, at the contents of the *Svargakhaṇḍa*. The second chapter of it treats of creation and should logically go to the first section, *Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa*. Chapters 3-9 deal with the division of the earth into islands (*dvīpas*), their mountains, rivers, countries and their population etc., which are more appropriately the topics of *Bhūmikhaṇḍa*. Again, almost all of the remaining chapters of this section deal with the holy places of India, the merits acquired by visiting them, taking a bath, performing charities, offering *piṇḍas* to the manes and worship to gods, and the codes of conduct laid down for the various castes and stages of life as well as do's and don't's in respect of eating etc., which being very much 'earthly' matters logically belong to the *Bhūmikhaṇḍa*.

Some conflicting statements about the size and structure of the Purāṇa are also found in this part. For example, the *Bhūmikhaṇḍa*, chapter 125, says that the number of verses in the Purāṇa was 52000 in Tretā, 22000 in Dvāpara and 12000 in Kali, while the *Svargakhaṇḍa*, chapter 1, gives a static figure of 55000. And similar is the case with the sections of the Purāṇa. According to the *Bhūmikhaṇḍa*, chapter 125, the Purāṇa has five sections only, viz. *Sṛṣṭi*, *Bhūmi*, *Svarga*, *Pātāla* and *Uttara*, thus leaving *Brahma* and *Kriyāyoga*, whereas the *Svargakhaṇḍa*, Chapter 1, enumerates six sections, viz., *Ādi*, *Bhūmi*, *Brahma*, *Pātāla*, *Kriyā* and *Uttara*. In this latter list the names of *Sṛṣṭi* and *Svarga* (its own name!) are missing and an unfamiliar name '*Ādi*' appears. In the last chapter (62), however, the name for this section occurs as '*Ādi-*

svarga', which would imply that this, i.e. *Svargakhaṇḍa*, was the first section of the Purāṇa, thus refusing any locus standi to the *Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa*.

Now a few words about the contents. The reader will find some new and interesting anecdotes and stories here extolling holy places such as Puṣkara, showing the efficacy of a bath in the rivers Revā, Gaṅgā etc. or of Viṣṇu's name, and glorifying worship of some god, e.g. Viṣṇu or Śiva, or some virtuous conduct. Subāhu's story shows that a gift of food, especially to a brāhmaṇa, is the best charity, and is even superior to penance. The stories of Aśokasundarī (II. 102ff), of Kāmodā (II. 118ff) and of the five gandharva maidens (III. 22ff) have a good deal of dramatic interest. The story of Hemakuṇḍala and his two wicked sons (III. 30ff) shows the efficacy of the river Yamunā.

Pilgrimage to holy places is treated of in great detail. Next in importance is the code of conduct prescribed for the celebate student, the householder, the anchorite and the ascetic (III. 51ff). Do's and don't's in respect of eating etc. are minutely discussed. Giving shelter and food to brāhmaṇas is considered highly meritorious. Gift of a cow to a brāhmaṇa at Prayāga is supposed to liberate not only the donor but also his son, wife and servants. Worshipping brāhmaṇas is shown to be superior even to bathing at a holy place. Mother is spoken of as the most venerable person and maligning others the greatest sin for which there is no atonement. A brāhmaṇa not responding to salutation is condemned as a śūdra and one is advised not to salute him. Protection of even such insignificant insects as lice and bugs is prescribed.

Third in length is the description of the earth's geography which to a large extent seems to be a product of imagination rather than of a scientific survey, as is obvious from the highly exaggerated figures given therein. To take a few examples: The height of the Jambu tree which lends its name to the Jambudvīpa, is said to be one thousand and a hundred yojanas (1 yojana = 8/9 miles); the Mālyavat mountain measures fifty thousand yojanas; the span of human life in the Bhadrāśva country is said to be ten thousand years. The reader will find many more interesting descriptions here.

Acknowledgements

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—*Editor*

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GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P.V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varanasi, 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇi*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	Monier Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	*Nāradīya* or *Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣīya Prācīna Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd. P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English version, MLBD, Delhi, 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, R. C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
Ṛ V	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Śat. Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā* by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

CHAPTER NINETYONE

Vidura, Candraśarman, Vedaśarman and Vañjula

Kuñjala said:

1-16a. Formerly when Indra was affected by (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa, he committed a great sin of having an illicit intercourse with Gautama's wife. He was abandoned by gods and brāhmaṇas. Indra, propless and shelterless, practised penance. At the end of his penance all deities, sages, yakṣas, kinnaras started a religious bath to honour the lord of gods. O best son, O noble one, having taken the lord of gods to the Mālavaka country they gave him a bath with (the water from) the pitchers filled with water. Then he was first taken to Vārāṇasī to give him a bath; then Indra (was taken) to Prayāga and then to Arghatīrtha. O best of brāhmaṇas, the noble one was given a bath by the magnanimous Puṣkara itself; he was also given a bath by all gods like Brahmā, by hosts of sages. Hallowed with Vedic hymns destroying all sins by sages, the lord of gods was given a bath by elephants, trees, serpents, snakes along with kinnaras. When that noble Indra was purified, his (sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa and (that of) illicit intercourse were gone. On the earth Indra's (sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa along with that terrible sin of illicit intercourse perished. Indra who was well-pleased granted a boon to the Holy Places: "Since, you, who, are pure, freed me from this very terrible sin, therefore, by my favour you will be holy and the lords of sacred places." Giving such a boon to them he gave a boon to (the) Mālava (country): "Since today you bore my dirt causing distress, therefore you will be adorned with food, drink, wealth and grains. There is no doubt about it. By my favour you will surely be very holy and free from bad times (like drought etc.)." After Indra, the lord of gods, had given him (i.e. the Mālava country) such a boon, all the Holy Places and also the Mālavaka country went to their respective places along with Indra.

Sūta said:

16b-17a. Since then the four, viz. Prayāga, Puṣkara, Vārāṇasī and Arghatīrtha obtained an excellent authority.

Kuñjala said:

17b-22. In the Pañcāla country there was a kṣatriya named Vidura. Due to folly he had formerly killed a brāhmaṇa. He, without the lock of hair on the crown of the head and without the sacred thread and without the (saffron-) mark (on his forehead) wandered for begging (saying): "I, the killer of a brāhmaṇa, have come. Give alms and food to the killer of a brāhmaṇa and a drunkard." Thus he formerly went to (different) houses and begged. Thus he came (to a spot) after having visited all the holy places. Yet, O best brāhmaṇa, (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa did not leave him. That sinful Vidura, full of agony and grief, and with his heart burning, resorted to the shade of a tree.

23-29a. Then, there lived in the Māgadha country a brāhmaṇa (named) Candraśarman; he was overcome with great delusion. He had killed his preceptor. The wicked one was deserted by his kinsmen and groups of relatives. He came there where Vidura stayed. He was without the lock of hair on the crown of his head and the sacred thread and the characteristic marks of a brāhmaṇa. Then he was asked by that wicked Vidura: "Who are you, unfortunate and of a distressed mind, that have come here? Why do you, bereft of the marks of a brāhmaṇa, roam over the earth ?" Thus addressed by Vidura, that mean brāhmaṇa Candraśarman told him everything that he had formerly done and the sin he had committed while staying in his preceptor's house. (He said:) "I, highly deluded and agitated with anger, formerly killed my preceptor. Therefore I am now tormented."

29b-32. Having told all (his) account, Candraśarman asked (Vidura), "Who are you of an extremely distressed mind, that have resorted to the shade of (this) tree?" Vidura narrated his sin in brief. Then there came a third twice-born, emaciated due to affliction, a heap of many sins, and named Vedaśarman. Both (Vidura and Candraśarman) asked him: "Who are you, a distressed figure? Why are you roaming over the earth? Tell (us) your true condition."

33-40. Then Vedaśarman told them all that he had done: "I had illicit intercourse; I was despised by all people and also by my kinsmen and relatives. I am polluted by that sin. (Therefore) I am wandering over the earth like this." Then (there came a

vaiśya named Vañjula, who was a drunkard. He was particularly a killer of cow. As before he was asked by (the other three). He narrated all the sin that he committed before. All the other (three) heard all that he told. Thus the four most sinful ones gathered at one place. None of them shared with one another food or coverings. O noble one, they (however) talked to one another. They did not occupy the same seat, nor did they sleep in the same bed. Thus full of grief they went to many holy places; but their terrible sins did not perish. The holy places do not have the power to destroy major sins. They, Vidura and others, went to Kālañjara mountain.

CHAPTER NINETYTWO

The Greatness of Revā

Kuñjala said:

1-3. Reaching Kālañjara (the four) very much afflicted, tormented by great sins, lamenting and senseless lived there; and there came a very glorious siddha. He asked them who were afflicted with great grief: "For what reason are you unhappy?" He the very wise one, and proficient in all (branches of) knowledge was told by them (the cause of their grief). The very meritorious one having known their great sin, showed compassion to them.

The siddha said:

4-36a. On the occasion of the new moon day falling on Monday, you four, impure with sins, should go to Prayāga, Puṣkara, Arghatīrtha, being the third, and Vārāṇasī, the fourth one. You will be free from sins when you will have bathed in the water of the Ganges. There is no doubt that you will attain purity.

All of them, instructed by him, carefully saluted him, (and) tormented by sins, quickly went from Kālañjara. The best twice-born ones—Vidura, Candraśarman, Vedśarman as the third, the drunkard and wicked-hearted vaiśya (named) Vañjulaka, having reached Vārāṇasī, O you best one, then to Prayāga, Puṣkara, and Arghatīrtha, when the new moon day fell on a Monday, went to the great city. When that auspicious day came they bathed in the water of the Ganges. Just by bathing (in the water of the Ganges) they became free from the sins like the murder of a cow. Those Holy Places, polluted with sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, of a preceptor, and of drinking liquor, roamed over the earth. O best brāhmaṇa, Puṣkara, Arghatīrtha, Prayāga—the destroyer of sins, and Vārāṇasī as the fourth, were polluted with sins. All became black, and roamed in the form of swans. The best brāhmaṇas bathed at all holy places. Their blackness that had come to them through sin would not leave (them, though), O king, they again and again bathed at very holy places. O best brāhmaṇa, whichever holy places they, in the form of swans, visited, all of them, being very much afflicted went with them. Women of the form of sins roamed around them. In the form of swans they went to sixtyeight very holy places. O great king, they (i.e. Vidura and others), with their minds full of sins, again came to the Mānasa (lake) alongwith the very Holy Places. O great king, there they bathed, but the major sin did not leave them. The Mānasa (lake), with its mind full of the sense of shame, and having taken the form of a swan, became black-bodied—whom you have seen before. Then they went to the northern bank of Revā which destroys sins. O best brāhmaṇa, they became free from sins just by (taking) a bath at the confluence of (Revā and Kubjā), which was resorted to by gods and siddhas. Having given up that (dark) complexion, they obtained merit. Whichever sacred place the swans had gone to, and had bathed at, women seeing them, laughed (at them); and the sin did not leave them at all, (but) by the fire in the form of the water of Kubjā even the greatest sin was reduced to ashes; and those women died. The sins of the murder of a brāhmaṇa, of a preceptor, that of drinking liquor and of illicit intercourse were reduced to ashes, destroyed by (the confluence of) Kubjā with Revā. Those that

died on the bank of the river, were, O noble one, gone. Know that swan to be Mānasa (lake) which accompanied the sixtyeight very holy places (moving) in the form of swans. Hear from me the names of the four black swans: Prayāga, Puṣkara, the excellent Arghatīrtha, and Vārāṇasī as the fourth one. All the four destroy sins. These four Holy Places, overcome with (the sin of) the murder of brāhmaṇas, went sadly to holy places, O you highly intelligent one. O son, the terrible sin of them, who were (thus) wandering, did not go away. They were indeed purified at the confluence of Kubjā (with Revā), and were freed from their sins. It is said that in front of Indra Prayāga became the king of all the meritorious holy places, (as he was) approved of by them. Let (other) holy places roar as long as the Revā is not seen as destroying sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Revā is greatly meritorious and very blessed at the conjunction with Meghanāda and the big confluence; Revā is not obtainable everywhere. She is difficult to be reached by men at Oṃkāra, Bhṛgukṣetra, and at her confluence with Narmadā and Kubjā, and by best gods at Māhiṣmatī. She is meritorious at her confluence with Viṭaṅkā, at Śrīkaṇṭha and Maṅgaleśvara. Revā, full of the merit of gods is not obtainable everywhere. A man is happy there, where (Revā) the mother of holy places, the great goddess and the destroyer of heaps of sins (flows) between the two banks. A man obtains the fruit of the horse-sacrifice by just one bath (in Revā).

36b-37. I have told you all this that you asked for, and that removes all sins, that is holy, giving salvation to those who listen to it.

Having spoken thus the very intelligent (Kuñjala) spoke to his third son.

CHAPTER NINETYTHREE

Vijvala Narrates His Experience

Kuñjala said:

1-2. O Vijvala, what thing not seen before and full of wonder did you, while wandering on the earth, see ? Tell me that, O you of a good vow. O best son, tell me which country did you go to with a strenuous effort for (obtaining) food; (tell me) what wonder you noticed.

Vijvala said:

3-6. On the surface of mountain Meru there is a forest by name Ānanda. It is abounding in divine trees, always full of fruits and flowers; it is crowded with groups of gods, and is attended by sages and siddhas, and also by beautiful celestial damsels, gandharvas, kinnaras and serpents; (it is full of) wells, ponds, lakes, rivers and streams. The holy forest Ānanda shines with divine objects, aeroplanes numbering in crores and resembling swans, kunda flowers and the moon. It is full of the mixed and sweet sounds of songs, and resounds with the thunders of clouds.

7-10. It is everywhere sweet due to the humming of bees. It is covered with sandal trees, mango trees and blossomed campaka trees. In this way that excellent Ānanda forest shines with many trees; and due to the notes of various birds it is full of a mixed sound. There I saw the very beautiful Ānanda forest like this. O father, a clean lake (i.e. lake with clean water) shines like an ocean (in the forest). It is full of auspicious water, and is crowded with auspicious aquatic animals, fragrant with lotuses and is full of swans and ducks.

11-12a. Thus in the centre of the forest there is a lake, adorned with crowds of gods and hosts of sages. It shines well with kinnaras, serpents, gandharvas and bards.

12b-26. O father, there I saw a wonder. It cannot be described. (A man) shone there with a divine aeroplane, shining with an umbrella, a staff and banners and full of all pleasures and with pitchers, O best one. O you of the best vow, he, the shining

one, was being praised by gandharvas, celestial nymphs and great sages. (None else) like him was seen; (he was) matchless in form in the world, with his entire body looking charming with ornaments, and round his neck a necklace made of big gems shone. I saw a beautiful lady standing near him. She was (adorned) with golden necklaces and with armlets and bracelets of pearls, and with divine garments and smearings of sandal. The man being praised and sung came there. The lady had the form of Rati, had fine hips, and plump buttocks and breasts. Due to the excellence of her form she was shining like that with ornaments. I saw these two, having the sweetness of form and beauty and endowed with all charm, coming there. The two noble ones—the man and the lady—having lotus-like eyes, got down from the aeroplane, came near the lake, and bathed there, O father. The couple having large weapons seized each other and like them the dead bodies of the two had fallen on the bank of the lake. The dead bodies were like the two—the man and the lady—of lotus-like eyes that were (seen) at Prabhāsa, even in form, O illustrious one. The dead body resembling a godly form, was like the man. The form of it was seen just like him. The other dead body had a form as was (that of) the wife. She then cut off the flesh from the female dead body and ate the (pieces of) flesh covered with blood. The man, being very eager, also ate the flesh of the dead body.

27-33a. The two, oppressed with hunger, ate the flesh of the two (dead bodies). They ate the flesh till they were satisfied. O father, then drinking the water in (i.e. of) the lake, the two became happy. Remaining there for some time they again went by the aeroplane. O father, I also saw there two other females. These two females were endowed with beauty and grace and had pleasing characteristics. When the two (i.e. the husband and the wife) were eating the flesh in the great forest, the two females laughed very loudly. When I was seeing (i.e. in my very presence) the two everyday ate the flesh after taking bath etc. O noble one, the other two females, having terrible forms, with their mouths fearful due to fangs, and very fierce said to them there only: "Give (us), give (us)."

33b-37a. Remaining in the vicinity of the forest I observed like this, O father. The two everyday cut off the flesh and ate it.

The bodies of the corpses (i.e. the dead bodies) again became complete. O father, everyday getting down like this, the two and the other (females) acted as I told (you) before, when I was seeing (i.e. in my presence). At that time, O father, I saw the wonder that took place (there). When O father, you asked me (if) I saw a wonder, I told you all that (I saw) which caused doubt.

37b-43. Through grace and with a pleasing heart tell me (about it). O best twice-born, who is that lotus-eyed one, of a divine form, who came with the lady in an aeroplane ? And O noble one, who is that lady that ate that large (quantity of) flesh? Who is that (man) and who is that (lady) that came there and ate (the flesh) ? Tell us (i.e. me), O father, about the other females that laughed at that time and said: "Give (us), give (us)". You tell me about these two very fearful females. O father, O you of a good vow, please remove this doubt of me.

Saying so the bird ceased (speaking). That (Kuñjala) thus asked by his third son Vijvala told him all account of Cyavana. So listen (to it).

CHAPTER NINETYFOUR

In Praise of Making Gift of Food

Kuñjala said:

1. O son, listen, I shall tell you the reason why the two became the eaters of their own flesh.

2-12a. There is no doubt that everywhere (i.e. for everything) auspicious or inauspicious act is the cause. O son, a man enjoys happiness due to a meritorious deed; and due to a sinful deed he suffers. A man should undertake a deed after having pondered over the subtle path by means of the eye of the knowledge of scriptures, and also after having repeatedly well thought over the coarse path of conduct with an accurate mind (i.e. thought), as,

O son, an artist, fashioning images, produces elegance (in them) by means of the lustre of the fire and flames all round. A metal, heated by fire would slowly turn into a liquid. O child, undoubtedly the kind of form produced is similar to the kind of food, perfect with taste, that is poured down. A deed is enjoyed in the same way as it is done. It is the deed that is the principal thing and that alone proceeds in the form of rain. O child there is no doubt that the farmer enjoys (i.e. reaps) the fruit as he sows the seed in the fields. (A man) enjoys in the same way as he performs a deed. Deed is the cause of his destruction. All of us are controlled by (the fruits of) our deeds. We are the heirs of our deeds and the kinsmen related to our deeds in the world. It is the deeds that prompt a man to pleasure or pain. As gold or silver is poured down (in a liquid form) as the form is (desired), in the same way a being is conceived in accordance with his former deeds.

12b-20. Of the fetus in the womb these five are seen: (span of) life, acts, wealth, learning and death. As the doer does (i.e. fashions different images from) a lump of clay, similarly acts that are performed grasp the doer. A being reached the state of a god or a human being or a beast or a bird or a lower animal or an immobile thing due to his acts only. He always enjoys in accordance with what is done by himself. He, having acquired the bed (in the form) of the womb enjoys pleasure or pain ordained by himself (and due to acts) in the former body (i.e. existence). Even by means of his intelligence or power the best of men is not able to change (the fruits of) the deeds (performed) in the former existence. (Beings) experience pains and pleasures (as a result) of their own deeds. He (i.e. a man) is compelled by self-prompted causes or reasons. As a calf finds his mother from among thousands of cows, in the same way (the fruits of) the deeds—good or bad—which do not perish otherwise than by being experienced follow the doer. Who can change the former deed that is binding ?

21-25a. The (fruit of one's) act runs after one who is running very fast, since the deed done formerly (inheres in the soul of the doer). It stands by one who stands, and follows one who goes (i.e. walks). The deed of one who performs (various acts), makes him act like a shadow. The being and his acts are like

the shadow and the sun which are always mutually well-connected. The objects of senses are diseases; old age etc. are diseases. They later trouble a man who is (already) oppressed by (his) former deeds. He who is to experience pain or pleasure (at a particular place) is always bound there as with a rope, and is forcibly carried (there) by destiny.

25b-30. They say that destiny gives pleasure or pain to beings. Fate is thought of in one way while a person is sleeping or awake (i.e. by a person who is sleeping or awake), and it presents itself in a different way, binds and desires to kill him. It well protects him from weapons, poison and calamities who deserves to be protected. As on the earth seeds, trees, clumps of trees and grass stand and multiply, in the same way the deeds (act) on the soul. As a lamp goes out when the oil (in it) is consumed, so the body of a being perishes with the destruction of the deeds. In the same way philosophers have said that death takes place after the destruction of the deeds. The various diseases of beings are said to be their causes. Therefore, deed is the principal (thing in the case) of beings.

31-34a. One enjoys (the fruit) of the deed which one does (i.e. has done) before. O child, I have told you the meaning of what you had seen and about which you asked me now. Now the two whose terrible deed you saw in the Ānanda forest, are enjoying each other. O child, I shall narrate their movements. Listen to me who am talking. O child, of the creations etc. this is the land of deeds (i.e. where deeds are performed) and other lands are meant for enjoyment. O very intelligent one, having gone into them one enjoys (the fruits of one's deeds).

Sūta said:

34b-37. In the Caula country (lived) a very wise king named Subāhu. He was handsome, virtuous (and) wise. There was none (else) like him. The king was Viṣṇu's devotee, he was highly intelligent and very dear to Viṣṇu's devotees. Meditating on Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) with three kinds of deeds (i.e. of body, mind and speech) he performed all sacrifice like the horse-sacrifice. His family priest was a brāhmaṇa by name Jaimini. He, having called that Subāhu, said these words to him:

38-41a. "O king, give gifts by which happiness is enjoyed. A

man after death goes beyond difficult worlds and crosses (difficulties). By means of gifts one gets happiness and eternal glory. In the world matchless fame is produced by (making) gifts. The doer (of pious deeds) would live in heaven as long as his fame lasts. Therefore, (giving) a gift is said to be difficult to do; it is not at all possible (to make) gifts. Therefore with all efforts men should always give (gifts)."

Subāhu said:

41b-42a. O best brāhmaṇa, tell me which of the two, (giving) gifts or penance, is very difficult to do and which (of the two) gives great fruit after death.

Jaimini said:

42b-46. There is nothing (else) more difficult to do than giving gifts. O king, it is actually seen by people. In the world, leaving (i.e. at the cost of) dear life people prompted by greed enter a sea or a forest for the sake of wealth. Others take to service (of others) which is (nothing but) a dog's life. Similarly some first (take to) farming which is full of harm and which is troublesome. O best among men, to give up that wealth, superior even to one's life, and earned with difficulty, is very difficult, especially that wealth, O great king, which is justly earned.

47-49a. There is no end to (the wealth) given with faith to a deserving recipient. Faith is the daughter of Dharma, a purifying goddess and an emancipator of all. She is Sāvitrī, the mother, and a boat to cross the ocean of the mundane existence. Religious merit is accomplished by means of faith and not with heaps of wealth. Indigent sages, having faith, have gone to heaven.

49b-61. O best king, there are many (kinds) of gifts. There is nothing superior to giving food which gives liberation to beings. Therefore, food, along with water, should be given, accompanied by sweet and pleasing words. There is nothing superior to giving food to a proper person with faith and proper rite for emancipation, well-being and happiness and wealth in this and the next world. A man enjoys the fruit of giving only food with a pure heart. He should give a morsel after a morsel, or a handful or of the measure of a prastha. There is no doubt

that the great fruit of that gift becomes inexhaustible. If a man, due to having nothing with him, cannot afford (to give) even a prastha or a handful, he should feed, with faith and devotion, a brāhmaṇa, after approaching him on a parvan-day. O lord of subjects, (by giving) the principal gift of food alone a man, in the next birth, well obtains food and enjoys food. Whatever is devoutly given by men in the former birth, is always enjoyed (by them) after well getting another existence. Those men (who) always give the gift of food to brāhmaṇas, enjoy sweet food and drink; they are (called) givers of food. The sages, who have mastered the Vedas call food as being life (itself), since it is undoubtedly sprung from nectar. He who has given food has given life. O great king, give the gift of food with (great) effort.

Having heard this (i.e. these words) of Jaimini, the king again asked that brāhmaṇa Jaimini, proficient in knowledge:

CHAPTER NINETYFIVE

Deeds Which Lead to Heaven

Subāhu said:

1. O best brāhmaṇa, now explain to me the merits of heaven. O greatest brāhmaṇa, I shall do all this naturally.

Jaimini said:

2-13a. There (i.e. in heaven) are various divine, meritorious, charming pleasure-gardens, full of all objects of desire and beautiful with trees satisfying all desires. (There are) everywhere aeroplanes attended by bevies of celestial nymphs. They are variegated; they move according to the desire (of the occupant); they are controlled (by the occupant). Their colour is like that of the young sun, and they have windows (decked) with pearls. They are white like the moon's orb, and have golden beds and seats. In them meritorious men, richly endowed with all objects of desires, and free from all griefs move as on earth. Non-be-

lievers do not go there. Those who have not conquered their senses do not (go there). Wicked, cruel, ungrateful and proud (people) do not (go) there. Men that are truthful, that remain in penance, that are brave, kind, forgiving, that perform sacrifices, and are given to giving gifts go there. There nobody suffers from a disease, old age; nobody meets with death; nobody suffers from cold or heat. Nobody has hunger, thirst or exhaustion. O king, there are many merits like these and others of heaven. Now listen to the defects that are there. The entire fruit of an auspicious deed is enjoyed there only. The great defect that is said to be (present) there is that much (activity) is not done (i.e. undertaken by the residents). Also there is dissatisfaction on seeing the bright glory of others. There is a sudden fall of them whose mind is full of happiness. The fruit of that deed which is done here is enjoyed there. O king, this is known to be the land of deeds and that the land of fruits.

Subāhu said:

13b-14a. O brāhmaṇa, you have narrated these great defects of heaven. Tell (me) about the worlds that are faultless and eternal.

Jaimini said:

14b-19. O king, there are defects right from the residence of Brahmā. Therefore the wise do not desire to obtain (i.e. to go to) heaven. Above the residence of Brahmā is the highest place of Viṣṇu. They know it to be an auspicious eternal light and as the highest Brahman. Foolish men, who are full of sensual desires, who are attacked (i.e. overcome) by religious hypocrisy, delusion, fear, treachery, anger and greed, do not go there. Good people who do not have the sense of mineness and egotism, who are free from the pairs of the opposite qualities (like pleasure and pain), whose senses are controlled, and who are engaged in profound meditation, go there. I have told you all this that you have asked me about.

Having thus heard the merits of heaven, Subāhu, the lord of the earth, asked the noble Jaimini, the best among speakers:

Subāhu said:

20-23a. O sage, I shall not go to heaven; I do not also desire (to go there). I shall not do that act by which there is a fall. O noble one, charity alone is (everything). Certainly when shall I not give? A man falls from it (i.e. heaven) because of (giving) gifts and desire for (their) fruits.

Having said so, that religious-minded Subāhu, the lord of the earth, (again spoke): "By means of profound meditation I shall worship that lord of gods (i.e. Viṣṇu), dear to Lakṣmī. I shall go to Viṣṇu's heaven which is free from tormentation and destruction."

Jaimini said:

23b-30a. O king, you have spoken the truth, which is full of all bliss. Kings are virtuous and they worship with great sacrifices. O prince, in sacrifices all (kinds of) gifts are given. In the sacrifices, they first give food, garments, tāmbūla, gold, and also give the gift of land and cows. Those best men go to Viṣṇu's world by means of good sacrifices. Kings are satisfied by (giving) gifts and are pleased. The noble devout ones always perform sacrifices, after having asked for good (i.e. sumptuous) alms and (after) having come to their own places. O king, (then) it (i.e. the food) is divided into parts for (distributing it) as alms. These (men) with penance as their wealth, O you very intelligent one, give one part to a brāhmaṇa, and one to those who are very near. Due to the gift of that food men enjoy (its) fruit. Free from hunger and thirst, they go to Viṣṇu's world.

30b-32. Therefore, O best king, you (should) also give the wealth earned justly. Having acquired knowledge from (having given) gifts, one will obtain perfection from (that) knowledge. That man who would listen to this meritorious and excellent account, will obtain all objects and all his sin melts away. Free from all sins, he goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

CHAPTER NINETYSIX

Good and Bad Deeds and the Fate of the Performer

Subāhu said :

1. Please tell me by (performing) which deeds men go to hell after death, (and) by (performing) which deeds they go to heaven after death.

Jaimini said :

2-5. Those brāhmaṇas who give up (leading) a brāhmaṇa's life and deluded by greed live on bad deeds go to hell. Atheists, those who have violated the norms of (good conduct), those who are intent upon (satisfying) sexual pleasures, religious hypocrites, and who are ungrateful go to hell. Men who do not give wealth to brāhmaṇas after having promised them, and also those who take away a brāhmaṇa's wealth go to hell. Wicked men, those who insult others, who tell lies and talk irrelevantly go to hell.

6. Those who snatch away the wealth of others, those who indicate others' faults and those who are adulterers go to hell.

7. Those who are always engaged in harming the life of beings and those who are engaged in reviling others go to hell.

8. Those who break good wells, lakes, places of water for travellers, or ponds go to hell.

9. Those who become averse to their wives, children, servants and guests and those who have abolished worship of dead ancestors and deities go to hell.

10. O king, those who censure the fourth stage in the life of a brāhmaṇa, or who censure the stages of life or who censure their friends go to hell.

11-13. Those who do not meditate upon Viṣṇu, the first (supreme) being, and the ruler and great lord of all the worlds; those who spoil the (principal sacrificial ceremonies like) Prayāja, or sacrifices or virgins or harm their friends or good people or the elders go to hell. Those who block the way with logs of wood or pegs or deserted stones go to hell.

14. Those who have no trust in all beings, who are always struck by desire of sensual enjoyments and are crooked towards all beings go to hell.

15-16. Those who prohibit brāhmaṇas who are badly off and who have come (to them) for food, those men who cut off a sacred place, (somebody's) livelihood or house, or affection or hope go to hell.

17-20a. O king of kings, those who make weapons, lances and bows, and those who sell (these) go to hell. Those fools who do not show pity for a helpless or a frightened or a miserable person or one afflicted with disease or an old man, those who first take up vows and later not controlling their senses violate them through fickleness go to hell. O king, I have thus told you about those who go to hell.

20b-23. (Now) learn from me about them who go to heaven. Those men who follow religion with the practice of truth, penance, forgiveness, charity or study go to heaven. Those high-minded ones who are engrossed in sacrifices and exclusively devoted to worshipping deities and those who approve of (these) go to heaven. The pure men who, exclusively devoted to Viṣṇu, recite and sing (hymns about) Viṣṇu in a pure place go to heaven.

24. Those men who respectfully always serve their mother and father and avoid sleeping by day go to heaven.

25. Those men who are averse to all (kinds of) harm, who have the company of the good, who are engaged in the well-being of all go to heaven.

26. Those men who are free from (all kinds of) greed and who help all, who give refuge to all go to heaven.

27. Those men who give respect to their elders by means of service and penance and who are averse to accepting (any gift) go to heaven.

28. Those men who clothe (i.e. give garments to) thousands, similarly those who give (in or) to thousands, and those who protect thousands go to heaven.

29. Those men who free beings from fear, sin, suffering, grief and who free (from poverty and disease) those who are emaciated due to poverty and disease go to heaven.

30. O you born in the family of Bharata, those wise men who

possess similarity with Brahman, who, though being young, have conquered their senses go to heaven.

31. O you descendant of Bharata, those men who give gold, cows and land, and food and garments also go to heaven.

32. Those men who are delighted when implored, and who talk agreeable (words) after having given (what is asked for), and those who have given up the fruit of what is given go to heaven.

33. Those men who themselves produce houses, grains and heroes and present them (to others) go to heaven, O hero.

34. Those men who never speak about the faults even of their enemies and (on the contrary) describe their virtues go to heaven.

35. Those men who are not distressed through jealousy on seeing the wealth of others, but are delighted and congratulate (them) go to heaven.

36. Those noble men who conform to the norms laid down in the Veda and the scriptures while engaged in work or abstaining from work go to heaven.

37. Those men, who do not speak disagreeable words to people, (but, on the contrary) speak agreeable words only go to heaven.

38. Those men who (even though) oppressed with hunger, thirst and fatigue share (their grains etc.) with others and make offerings to guests go to heaven.

39. Those men who construct reservoirs of water, wells, and water booths for travellers, houses and gardens go to heaven.

40. Those men who are truthful (i.e. behave truthfully) with liars, who are straightforward with the crooked, who are friendly even with their enemies go to heaven.

41. Those men who, being born in whatever family, have many sons, live for a hundred years, are kind and of a good behaviour go to heaven.

42. Those men who always make their days religiously productive and who always take up a vow go to heaven.

43. Those men who with their minds tranquil and control-

led look with equanimity upon a person shouting abuses or praising them go to heaven.

44. Those men who protect fear-stricken brāhmaṇas, women or pilgrims go to heaven.

45. Those men who offer balls of rice to their dead ancestors at obsequial ceremonies or śrāddhas performed on the Ganges or at the holy place of Puṣkara or especially at Gayā go to heaven.

46. Those men who are not under the sway of their senses, who remain controlled, who have given up greed, fear and anger go to heaven.

47. Those men who protect like their own sons, insects like lice, bugs or gadflies that prick the body go to heaven.

48. Those men (though) not knowing (the procedure) collect (wealth) according to the rule as told (in the scriptures) and who put up with all the pairs (of opposites) (like pleasure and pain) go to heaven.

49. Those pure and good men who do not dally with others' wives physically, mentally or in speech go to heaven.

50. Those men who do not perform prohibited deeds but do only those that are enjoined (in the scriptures) and who know their inherent power go to heaven.

51-52. O king, I have thus accurately told you everything as to how misfortune or good fortune is obtained by means of deeds. A man who behaves unpleasantly with others goes to a fierce, very terrible hell. For a man who always behaves agreeably, salvation, causing pleasure, is not far away.

CHAPTER NINETYSEVEN

Subāhu Eats His Own Flesh

Kuñjala said:

1. The king, having heard all the result of good and bad conduct as told by the sage at that time, said to the sage:

Subāhu said:

2. O best brāhmaṇa, that I (who am thus advised by you) will practise righteousness; I shall (do) meritorious (acts); O sage, I shall very much worship Vāsudeva (i.e. Viṣṇu), the source of the world.

3-6. The king would worship (i.e. worshipped) Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) by performing sacrifices and muttering prayers. He, having performed a sacrifice, and having practised penance, and being endowed with all desired objects gladly and quickly reached Viṣṇu's heaven (along with the queen). Having gone there he did not (i.e. could not) see the lord of gods in that great world. Great hunger arose in them, and great thirst proceeded (i.e. they felt extremely hungry and thirsty) which very much troubled their soul. The king too oppressed by hunger and thirst along with his wife and full of great grief did not see Viṣṇu.

Sūta said:

7-14. O best one, the king, along with his wife, was thus very much grieved, was perturbed and perplexed and was very much oppressed by hunger. That lord of the earth, speedily ran hither and thither. That king, with his entire body adorned with ornaments, decorated with garments and sandal (-paste applied to his body), with his body (looking) lovely on account of garlands of flowers, and with necklaces, earrings, and bracelets, and with his limbs (looking) elegant due to the lustre of jewels, moved. Thus, proceeding unhappily, being praised by bards, and full of sorrow and affliction he said (these) words to his wife: "O you very auspicious one, O you beautiful lady, being praised by the sages, I have, along with you, reached Viṣṇu's heaven in an aeroplane. Due to which act (of mine) great hunger springs (in me); and (even) after having reached Viṣṇu's world I have not seen (i.e. I have not been able to see) Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu). O good one, what (then) is the cause due to which I am not enjoying the great fruit (of my good deeds)? This unhappiness has arisen due to (my) own deeds." Having thus heard his words, she said to the king:

The wife said:

15-19a. O king, you have said the truth. There is no fruit

of good conduct, (though) the meritorious and noble brāhmaṇas declare in the Vedas, sacred texts and Purāṇas that a man merely by the utterance of the names of Viṣṇu, the holder of the good (i.e. powerful) disc, casts off his grief and affliction, and becomes free from all blemishes. You did propitiate the god, the holder of the conch, disc, and mace; but you did not give food to brāhmaṇas, as told by them. I understand that its fruit is that you have not seen (i.e. you could not see) Viṣṇu. O king, hunger is troubling me; thirst also would dry me up.

Kuñjala said:

19b-26a. Thus addressed by his wife, the king had his senses confounded due to anxiety. Then he saw a holy hermitage, which removed fatigue, which was crowded with divine trees, which looked beautiful with lakes, and with wells, pools and tanks full of holy water, which was crowded with swans and ducks and which looked charming with white lotuses. O son, the hermitage was splendid by the presence of philosopher-sages. (He saw) the hermitage, which was crowdel with divine trees and which looked beautiful with herds of deer. It was abounding in various flowers; it was full of agreeable fragrance; it was crowded with brāhmaṇas and siddhas; it was full of the disciples of sages; it was adorned with hosts of gods; it looked beautiful with throngs of the clusters of plantain trees having abundant fruits. It was full of many kinds of trees and was endowed with all desired objects; it was always beautiful with sandal (trees) having pleasing fragrance and with fruits.

26b-33. That king Subāhu entered with his wife that very meritorious forest satisfying desires, which was thus full of merit and had the characteristics of austerity. There was the best sage Vāmadeva, the best among the devotees of Viṣṇu, brightening all the directions like the sun, shining like the sun with very great lustre, sitting in a posture suited to profound and abstract meditation and covered with a cloth used at the time of profound and abstract meditation, and meditating upon Viṣṇu, the giver of enjoyments and salvation. Having seen that noble Vāmadeva, the best of the sages, he quickly went with his wife to him, and saluted him. Then Vāmadeva having seen the best king bent before him, having greeted the king accompanied by his

wife with blessings, seated the best Subāhu on an auspicious seat and the sage (thus) honoured the king that had arrived with his wife, with a seat etc., (honoured him) by giving him water for washing his feet and respectful offerings. Then the great devotee of Viṣṇu asked the king:

Vāmadeva said:

34-35a. O lord of kings, by means of my divine knowledge I know you to be knowing the Vaiṣṇava practices, to be a devotee of Viṣṇu and to be the best man, and to be the lord of Cola. You, the guileless one, have come here with your wife Tārkṣyā.

The king said :

35b-39a. I, the guileless one, have come here, and have reached the highest place of Viṣṇu. With great devotion I have propitiated Viṣṇu, the god of gods, the lord of the world, who is pleased with devotion. O father, why do I not see the lord of gods, the husband of Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī)? Hunger is troubling me, so also very poignant thirst (is troubling me), O father. Due to them we two (i.e. my wife and I) are not obtaining peace and are not at all having happiness. O best sage, this is the cause of my unhappiness. Do me a favour and be well disposed (and) tell me the cause (of this).

Vāmadeva said:

39b-51a. O lord of kings, you are always devoted to Śrīkṛṣṇa. With great devotion you have propitiated Viṣṇu by means of devoted service, by bathing (his idol) and by means of sandal, flowers etc. also. (But) you have not honoured the lord of the worlds with offerings of eatables and fruits. When you reached the tenth day (of the month, i.e. when the tenth day arrived) you have always done (this viz.) you have not given identical good food to brāhmaṇas. Having reached the eleventh day (i.e. when the eleventh day came), you did not take food. You did not give food to a brāhmaṇa, dedicating it to Viṣṇu. Food always remains in the form of nectar on the earth. Especially you have never made a present of food. O king, herbs are of various kinds. Listen to them: (They are) bitter, pungent, astringent, sweet, sour and saline; there are condiments like Asafoetida, and they are of

various forms, O king. All herbs causing nourishment have sprung up from nectar. Food alone, after consecrating it with Vedic hymns, and accompanied by herbal sauces is given with an intention of dedicating it to gods in the form of Viṣṇu and the manes in the form of Viṣṇu, into the hand of a brāhmaṇa. Then after giving it to the guests one should feed his attendants. After that he himself eats the food rrsembling nectar. O king, he has no grief after death, but has happiness. O king, brāhmaṇas are manes, and gods have the form of kṣatriyas. O king, as a farmer always carries on good agriculture, in the same way a man should do agriculture in the field of the mouth of a brāhmaṇa. He should cleave it with the plough of his innate disposition and with the weapon of faith.

51b-54. Similarly intellect and penance are always looked upon as the bulls. His truthfulness, knowledge and prowess are the controller and his pure soul is the whip. He should give it up with salutations into the great field in the form of a brāhmaṇa, O king, as a farmer, engaged in an assiduous effort in farming, cleaves, dirt, in the same way, one who desires (to reach) Viṣṇu should propitiate (him). Similarly with good, meritorious words he should please brāhmaṇas also.

55-60. O king, as a farmer desiring to sow (seeds) when the cloud showers would sow (seeds), in the same way on a parvan day or at a holy place (a present) is given to a brāhmaṇa who is pleased. O great king, as a farmer enjoys the fruit of the seed sown by him, similarly a giver enjoys the fruit (of the gift given by him). He always becomes satisfied after death (i.e. in the next world) and here (i.e. in this world) (by giving a gift and) not in any other way. Brāhmaṇas are manes and gods are of the nature of fields; there is no doubt about this. So when presents are offered to them in a sacrifice, they certainly give fruits of that nature. There is no doubt about this. O king, sweet things would not spring from bitter ones; in the same way bitter things would not be produced from the ones that are known as sweet. One gets the fruit as one sows the seed. He who does not sow (seeds in) the field, does not get its fruit.

61-65. Similarly, O king, brāhmaṇas, gods and manes of the nature of a field, present the fruit of what is given. There is no doubt about it. O king, enjoy (the fruit of) your good or bad

deeds in the same manner as you have done them. That cannot be otherwise. Formerly you never gave with a good mind (i.e. sincerely) sweet food and drink. You yourself enjoyed good purified eatables, food, articles of food that are sucked and drinks and (other) articles of food; but you never gave these (to brāhmaṇas etc.). You nourished your own body with food resembling nectar. O great king, since you did (this), therefore hunger has been produced (in you).

66-72a. O king, (one's) deeds are the cause of (one's) happiness and unhappiness, (so also) of one's birth and death. O illustrious one, enjoy the fruit of those deeds. Formerly also noble souls reached heaven due to their deeds. After the exhaustion of (the fruit of) the deeds according to their destiny, they have again gone to (i.e. born on) the earth. Nala, Bhagīratha, so also Viśvāmitra and Yudhiṣṭhira obtained (i.e. reached) heaven by means of their deeds according to their destiny. The former deeds are destined to bear fruit; and due to them one would get happiness or unhappiness. O king, which lord (even) is able to resist it? Therefore, O greatest king, you had the affliction due to hunger and thirst, even though you have come to heaven. Therefore, (it is presumed that) your deeds were bad. If, O best king, you desire to satisfy your hunger, then go and eat your own body lying in the Ānanda forest. This your great queen also seems to be very much emaciated due to hunger.

Subāhu said:

72b-74a. O glorious one, how long have I to do that act along with my wife? (Please) tell me that. When will the grace of (Viṣṇu) be perceived? O best sage, which religious merit would be obtained by giving which gift? O you highly intelligent one, tell me that if you are pleased now.

Vāmadeva said:

74b-87a. O you very intelligent one, great happiness is obtained by the gift of food (and) of water. Mortals enjoy heaven and are not at all harassed by their sins. When men might not have given gifts (during their life-time), all (men) give gifts at the time of death. (Therefore) right from the first (a man) should

give food with water. He who would offer (these) eight (kinds of) gifts (like) a good umbrella, shoes, a good vessel for (storing) water, land, pure gold, does not feel hungry or thirsty etc. in heaven. O king, by giving food hunger does not oppress (the giver, since) he is satisfied. His thirst is not acute, (since) he is fully satisfied. O king, the giver by giving the gifts of sandals and an umbrella obtains shade, and by giving shoes he obtains a vehicle, O best king. Thus I am telling something else. O noble one, by giving the gift of land he would obtain all his desired objects. O great king, by giving a cow one would always prosper with desires (i.e. desired objects). The man enjoying all pleasures would live in heaven. There is no doubt that the giver (of a cow) becomes satisfied by giving a cow. He is free from diseases, is endowed with pleasures, is content, and possesses wealth. Due to the gift of gold he becomes (a man) of good complexion; there is no doubt about it. A man would become rich, handsome, heroic, and enjoyer of gems. He who gives sesamum seeds when the time of death has come, becomes the lord of all enjoyments and goes to Viṣṇu's world. Thus by special gifts great happiness in obtained. O lord of kings, when you were alive, you did not give a cow (or) land (or) food and water to a brāhmaṇa. You did not give (any of these objects) even at the time of death. Therefore hunger has arisen in you.

87b-88a. Thus I have told you the cause that arose due to your deeds. As a deed is done so it (i.e. its fruit) is enjoyed.

Subāhu said:

88b-90a. O best sage, how will my hunger be satiated? My body, parched up with it is extremely afflicted. O best brāhmaṇa, tell us too about our hunger and about the atonement for our terrible deeds, so that I shall have peace.

Vāmadeva said:

90b-93a. O best king, there is no other atonement than eating (your own bodies). Relying on your own exertions you will enjoy all the fruit of these deeds. O king, from here you should go (there) where your body fell, so also of your wife. There is no doubt about it. O king, both of you, you and your wife, should

eat up your own inexhaustible body. There is no doubt about this.

The king said:

93b-94a. O noble one, advise me about the measure (i.e. the length of) time as to how long I, with my wife, have to eat (up our own bodies).

Vāmadeva said:

94b-95. When you will hear the great hymn (in honour) of Vāsudeva, destroying great sins, you will obtain meritorious salvation. O king, I have told you all this. Go and eat up (your own body).

96-113. Hearing (the words) like this, the king, along with his wife ate up the flesh of his own body. Everyday like that (i.e. as already told) the body again would become (i.e. became) full, O very intelligent one. O son, the king and the queen ate up (the flesh) of their (own bodies). As the king went on eating (his own) body, the two ladies laughed. I shall tell you about their temperament. With (Śraddhā) very chaste Prajñā laughed at the behaviour of the king. The imperishable Śraddhā (also) always laughed at him. Being urged by Prajñā, you did not give with reverence food to brāhmaṇas after dedicating it to Viṣṇu. In this way (the king) everyday ate up the flesh of his own body. His wife also ate up her own body with nectar-like taste. O you of a good vow, then at the end of a hundred years, he, remembering the great sage Vāmadeva, condemned himself. (He said to himself:) 'I never gave (food) to manes and deities and to brāhmaṇas. I did not give (food) to guests, especially to old ones. I did not, through pity, give (food) to the poor and the weak.' Thus condemning his deeds, he ate his own flesh. Then seeing Subāhu, along with his wife, eating (their) own flesh, the two ladies—Prājñā and Śraddhā laughed (at them). His pure soul laughed at the fruit of those deeds. (The soul said:) 'O you of a sinful heart, (even) due to my company and close contact, you did not give (gifts).' Prajñā also with the words, 'O king, where has the great folly, by which you were deluded, gone?' laughed (at him). (A man) is thrown into the ditch of darkness due to greed along with delusion. Having

fallen there, you threw me into a painful peril. O king, having left the path of giving gifts you went to the path of greed. Being very much afflicted by bunger eat along with your wife (the flesh of your own body).' Thus that Prajñā laughed at that Subāhu accompanied by his wife. O son, this is the reason of their laughing. When, O you very wise one, the king was eating (the flesh), the two, viz. hunger and thirst being pained always begged of him and said: 'Give (us), give (us the flesh).' The two asked the lord of kings for food mixed with milk (or water). I have told you all that you had asked me. O you very intelligent one, what else I shall (i.e. should) narrate to you?

Vijvala said:

114. O father, tell me that hymn called (the hymn in honour of) Vāsudeva, by (reciting) which the king would reach salvation—that highest place of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER NINETYEIGHT

The Vāsudeva Hymn

Sūta said:

1-7. When the glorious Vijvala uttered these auspicious words, Kuñjala, the best among speakers, told him the auspicious hymn. The hymn in honour of Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) is recited after meditating upon and saluting Hṛṣīkeśa, who destroys all sufferings and gives entire religious merit. The hymn is called (the hymn in honour of) Vāsudeva; it gives all virtue; it is the gate to salvation; it is possessed of happiness; it gives peace; it enhances nourishment; it gives all desired objects; it gives knowledge and increases knowledge. (Kuñjala) manifested to Vijvala the hymn of Vāsudeva. (The hymn) is called Vāsudeva (-hymn); it is boundless and increases nourishment. Vijvala, the best among birds, having learned it from his father, started to go there (and) asked (the permission of) his father. The religious minded (Kuñjala) said to his son Vijvala who had decided to go, who

had mastered knowledge and who was intent upon obliging (others).

Kuñjala said:

8-9. O son, listen, since I know the great sin of the king, go from here and recite it when Subāhu is overhearing. The more he will hear the excellent hymn the more he will be full of (i.e. he will have) knowledge of Vāsudeva, due to his (i.e. Vāsudeva's) grace. Undoubtedly I have spoken very well.

10-12. Taking leave of his father, Vijvala of a quick pace, flew and then reached the auspicious Ānanda-forest. Resorting to the shade of a tree, he, full of joy, sat (there). Having (formerly) seen the king who had come in an aeroplane (he thought to himself:) 'When will king Subāhu come with his wife? When shall I free him from the sin by means of this hymn ?'

13-14. Just then the aeroplane reached there adorned with a number of small bells, filled with the sound of bells accompanied by lute and flute, full of the sound of gandharvas and having celestial nymphs, rich in all desired objects but without food and water.

15-19. King Subāhu was seated in that plane with his wife. With his wife Sutārkṣyā, he got down from the aeroplane. When he took a sharp weapon and cut off the dead body, Vijvala called out to him: "O best among men, O you resembling gods, you are doing this act which (even) cruel men cannot do. O distinguished man, what is this adverse fate! Tell me the entire reason why you have commenced this evil, rash act, always condemned in the world and opposed to the Vedic practice."

20-24. Having heard these words of the noble Vijvala, the great king said (these) words to his wife: "O dear one, I, of evil acts, have been eating this for a hundred years. Nobody ever spoke like this as he is talking. O dear one, the heart of me who am being thus oppressed by hunger (has become) eager, and gone out; (now) there is peace in (my) heart. O you of a charming smile, when I have heard his words putting an end to my grief, great joy abides in my heart. Who is he? Can he be a gandharva or Indra? The words of sages would come true, since the sage formerly had said (like this)."

25-28a. Having heard these words of her dear (husband), the wife, who was devoted to her husband, then said to the king: "O Lord, you have spoken the truth. This is the greatest wonder. As you have (an idea) in your mind so do I have in my mind. Who is this who having taken up the form of a bird, asks (you) like a benefactor?" Having heard these words of his wife, the lord of the earth, joining the palms of his hands, said (these) words:

Subāhu said:

28b-31a. O you very intelligent lord, welcome to you who have taken up the form of a bird. Along with my wife I am, with (i.e. bowing) my head, saluting both your lotus-like feet. Let us have religious merit through your grace. Who are you that are in the form a bird, talking such good (words)? O best one, (the fruit of) whatever good or bad deed is done by the former body (in a former existence) is enjoyed here only.

31b-33a. Then he told him his account. He heard it (i.e. it was) as it was told by his father Kuñjala. "Tell me the account of you who are talking to me." Then the best bird said these words to Subāhu:

Vijvala said:

33b-36a. My father, Kuñjala by name, was born in the species of parrots. Among his sons, I am the third, Vijvala by name. O you of great arms, I am not a god, not a gandharva, nor am I a siddha. Everyday I am observing (your) very terrible deed. O great king, tell me now how long you will (continue to) do this deed full of violence?

Subāhu said:

36b-38a. When I shall hear the hymn called Vāsudeva-hymn which was formerly recited by the brāhmaṇas, then, O good man, I shall find my own course (to salvation). The sage, of a controlled mind, has said that then I shall be undoubtedly free from my sin.

Vijvala said:

38b-39. For you I asked my father. O best one, listen. I shall tell you the eternal (truth) that he told me: Om, of this hymn called Vāsudeva-hymn, Nārada is (the author); anuṣṭup is the metre. Oṃkāra is the (presiding) deity. I employ (myself) in repeating the prayers for the destruction of all sins and for accomplishing the four goals (of human life). The hymn is: "Om Namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya (My salutation to the holy Vāsudeva).

40-51. I salute Praṇava (i.e. the sacred syllable 'Om') that is purifying, very meritorious, that knows the Vedas, that is the abode of the Vedas, the support of learning, and of existence. I salute the highest Praṇava, which is without an abode, which has no form, which is very bright and very glorious, which is qualityless (yet) connected with qualities. I salute (the Praṇava) that is very lovely, very energetic, that destroys great delusion, that fills all the world, and is beyond qualities. He coming into existence, shines everywhere, and increases prosperity. I salute Śiva (or auspicious) Praṇava that is fearless and connected with mendicants. I salute Praṇava that is the singer of Gāyatrī and Sāman, the song and the one to whom songs are dear; and that enjoys the singing of gandharvas. I salute that Oṃkāra, that is the thought, that is of the form of the Vedas, that remains in the sacrifice and that is affectionate towards the devotees, and that is the origin of the entire world. I salute that Praṇava (in the form of) Hari, which, manifesting itself in the form of a boat, is the emancipator of all beings drowning in the ocean of the worldly existence. I salute that auspicious Praṇava (or Praṇava in the form of Śiva), which, living in many ways in the same form in all the worlds, is the abode in the form of salvation. I salute (that Praṇava) which is subtle (nay), subtler, pure, qualityless, the principal quality, which is free from unrefined states, and which is the abode of the Vedas (or of which Vedas are the abode). I salute that Oṃkāra which is always free from the losses of gods and demons and (is full of) contentment; and which is being meditated upon by gods and meditating saints. I salute Praṇava, the lord, which is (all-)pervading, which is omniscient, which is the highest pure knowledge, which is Śiva (or pure), which has auspicious qualities, and which is tranquil. I salute (that Praṇava),

having entered whose illusion, gods and demons like Brahmā, do not find the very pure gate of salvation.

52-78. (My) salutation to that very lustrous, pure, Vāsudeva, the bulb of joy, of pure intelligence, and the lord of the demigods. I always seek the refuge of the lord, who is shining with the Pāñcajanya (conch), with the Sudarśana (disc) lustrous like the sun and with (his) mace and lotus. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva who is concealed by the Vedas, who is possessed of qualities and is the support of qualities and of the movable and the immovable, whose lustre is like that of fire and the sun. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, the receptacle of hunger, pure and handsome, shining with joy and respect, reaching whom all the worlds (like those of) gods, live. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, bright and lustrous like the sun, who destroys with his own rays masses of darkness, who is always the object of worship. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, who shines everywhere (and) causes drying up with his sunlike lustres and gives water, and who is the internal air of living beings. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, who, the god of gods, sustains, according to his will, all worlds and all kins, and acts like a boat in helping (beings) to cross (the ocean of the mundane existence). I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, who, full of the worlds, is always present (in bodies) of the mobile and the immobile, and digests (food) with the mouth of Svāhā, and is the cause of the host of gods. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, the pleasant one and the giver of qualities in the world, who with all very good saps, nourishes, with pure lustre, foods. That (Vāsudeva), the cause of destruction, the refuge of all, full of everything and complete is present everywhere. He enjoys the objects of sense without the organs of sense. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva. He then sustains, with his own form, the mobile and immobile worlds—his own forms. He is utterly perfect, full of knowledge and very pure. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva. I seek the shelter of that Vāsudeva—the destroyer of the demons, the root (cause) of the destruction of misery, the tranquil, the highest, the huge one, full of power, reaching whom the gods become humble. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva (who is) happiness, the limit of happiness, the giver of happiness, the lord of gods, the ocean of knowledge, the protector of sages, the chief of gods, the prop of truth,

and practising the virtue of truth. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva (who is) of the form of the sacrificial requisites, who is of the nature of the highest truth, (who is) endowed with the cosmic power, the lord of Lakṣmī, (who is) fierce (yet) auspicious, (who) alone (is) knowledge, and (who is) the abode of the worlds. His bed is in the ocean. He sleeps on the huge hood of snake (i.e. Śeṣa). I everyday salute the holy couple of the lotus-like feet of that Vāsudeva. The two feet of the holy Vāsudeva are full of merit, confer happiness, are always being attended upon by the holy places, andthey remove sins. I always salute the lotus-like feet of the holy Vāsudeva which resemble large red lotuses, have the good marks of lotuses, are fit for conquest, and are adorned with the prints of anklets. I always salute the holy feet of the holy Vāsudeva, which are always devoutly praised by gods, good siddhas, sages and lords of serpents. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, by bathing in the water of whose feet, sages, being purified and freed from sins and well-pleased, obtain salvation. There are always (present) holy places like the Ganges where the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu remains. Those with their bodies (stained) by fierce sins, sprinkled with the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, go to (i.e. obtain) salvation. I always salute the two feet of that highest lord only. Men obtain the fruit of the holy Vājapeya (sacrifice) on having properly eaten the offering of eatables (done in honour) of the noble (Viṣṇu), the holder of the great disc; and they become endowed with all (desired) objects. I seek the refuge of that Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa, the destroyer of hells, free from illusion, perfect and knowing (i.e. appreciating) virtues, by meditating upon whom men obtain a good course (i.e. salvation). With devotion I salute the good, excellent, sanctifying couple of the feet of him (i.e. Viṣṇu) who is saluted by hosts of sages, siddhas and bards, who is always worshipped by gods, who is the chief, first lord i.e. Brahmā in bringing about the creation of the universe, and who is the affectionate emancipator of him who has fallen into the great ocean of the worldly existence. I salute the extremely purifying couple of the lotus-like feet of the holy Vāmana (i.e. Viṣṇu) that removed, with the auspicious glances, the sin of Bali, and who was seen singing the Sāmans in the sacrificial hall by hosts of gods and who, the only lord of the three worlds and eager to sing Sāmanas (was

seen) by the groups of gods. I salute that lord Vāmana, shining in the group of brāhmaṇas at the head of the satrifice, adorned with Brahmanic glory, full of rays with bright divine lustre resembling a sapphire, and imploring for the good of gods, that good son of Vairocana (as:) 'Give me (the land covered by my) three steps.' I praise the matchless stride of the lord, the holder of the good disc, to see which (stride) in the orb of the sun, which covered the heaven in the interval between the setting of the moon and the sun, the groups of sages reached heaven, and became merged into his body—the big sheath of the universe."

CHAPTER NINETYNINE

God Viṣṇu Appears to Subāhu

Viṣṇu said:

1-5. The king, on hearing the hymn which was pure, very ancient, which removed sins, which was full of merit and auspicious, which was blessed, which contained good words, which was greatly fit to be muttered, became happy. His great thirst, along with his hunger, vanished. The lord of the earth became like a god. His wife also shone. Both of them, freed from the bondage of sin, became endowed with good form. That god, the holder of the auspicious conch, disc, lotus, mace and sword, surrounded by great gods, brāhmaṇas, great siddhas full of the devotion of Hari came to the king whose sins had vanished. The holy Nārada, Bhārgava, Vyāsa (came there). The son of Mṛkaṇḍa (also) came there. The sage Vālmīki, Viṣṇu's devotee, (so also) Vasiṣṭha, the son of Brahmā, came there. The illustrious Garga, full of devotion for Viṣṇu, Jābāli and Raibhya, so also Kaśyapa, (all) dear to Viṣṇu, and best among the followers of Viṣṇu, came there with Viṣṇu.

6-8a. They (who were) meritorious and very blessed, (who were) free from sins, (who were) full of devotion for the lotus-like feet of Hari, stood there, surrounding Hari, and praised the king in various ways. All gods led by Fire, so also Brahmā and

Hari* and very divine goddesses (came there). Good singers like the gandharva-king sang divinely, sweetly and charmingly. Sages praised him with very auspicious hymns from the Vedas and furnished with the most sublime truth.

8b-11. Seeing the lord, the king, god Viṣṇu spoke (these) charming words: "O king, ask for the desired boon; I shall grant it to you, since you have pleased me." The king, hearing the words of Viṣṇu, a blue lotus (in complexion), the destroyer of Mura, the lord holding the conch, disc, sword and mace, the highest lord accompanied by Lakṣmī and bright with gems, adorned with bracelets and necklaces, bright like the sun, well attended upon by gods, well adorned with ornaments like costly necklaces, (with his body) besmeared with very divine sandal (pastes), and talking in front of him, went down to the earth (i.e. prostrated before Viṣṇu) with great devotion.

12-16. The great king constantly saluted (Hari) with prostrations and with the words: "Victory to you. I am your slave, your servanta, always (standing) before you. I do not know either devotion or best manners. O Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), protect me, who have, along with my wife, sought your refuge. O Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu), those men who are always engrossed in meditation upon you, are blessed. From here they, being extremely pure, and uttering (your names) Bhava, Mādhava, go to Vaikuṇṭha. Those men who carry on their head the pure water coming out (i.e. flowing from) your lotus-like feet, have (certainly) bathed in the water coming from all holy places. They go to the good abode of Hari. I do not have deep and abstract meditation. I do not have knowledge. I do not have any exertion. Due to (my) contact with what (kind of) religious merit are you granting me a boon ?"

Hari said:

17-18. O king, there is no doubt that you are getting salvation because you heard from the pure and sinless Vijvala, the great sin-destroying (hymn) called Vāsudeva (-hymn). In my world enjoy divine pleasures according to your desire.

The king said:

19. O god, if I, a poor person, am to be granted a boon, then first give an excellent boon to Vijvala.

*Obviously a misprint. It should be Hara (god Śiva).

Hari said:

20-22. O king, Vijvala's father Kuñjala, adorned with knowledge, everyday recites the great hymn (in honour) of Vāsudeva. With his sons and wife, he will go to my abode. He always mutters this hymn; (so) I shall give him (its) fruit.

When these auspicious words were said (by Viṣṇu), the king spoke to Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu): "O Keśava, make this very auspicious hymn fruitful."

Hari said:

23-30. O great king, when, in the Kṛtayuga, men will praise (me with this hymn), they will undoubtedly go to (i.e. obtain) salvation (just) at that moment. O best king, those men who would mutter this hymn (in honour) of Viṣṇu, leading to salvation, for just three months in Tretāyuga, for six months in Dvāparayuga, and for a year in Kaliyuga, go to heaven. A brāhmaṇa who mutters it thrice or once (a day), gets whatever is desired by him. A kṣatriya, adorned with wealth and grains, gets victory. A viaiśya will be rich; a śūdra will be happy. He who relates this to a man of an inferior tribe, becomes free from sin. The hearer never sees (i.e. goes to) a terrible hell; and due to the grace of my hymn he will have accomplished everything. The manes of him who will recite it (i.e. get it recited) by brāhmaṇas at the time of a śrāddha, will go to Viṣṇu's heaven after being satisfied. A brāhmaṇa or a kṣatriya should mutter (this hymn) at the end of presenting libations to the manes of the dead ancestors. His manes, with their minds pleased, drink nectar.

31-36a. If a man devoutly mutters this at the time of offering oblations to gods in a sacrifice, no difficulties come up there (i.e. in the sacrifice), and he will accomplish everything. One should utter this hymn in a danger in a difficult place, or in danger from a fierce tiger, or when danger from thieves has come up. O great king, that (danger etc.) will be removed. There is no doubt about it. At other auspicious (times) or when a man has gone, to the gate of a royal palace he mutters (i.e. should mutter) the hymn called Vāsudeva (-hymn) for ten thousand times. Well-

bathed, free from anger and greed, with his mind controlled, a man should, with chastity, offer a sacrifice with sesamum-seeds, rice mixed with ghee of the measure of one-tenth (of them), after having worshipped Vāsudeva. Then men should offer a sacrifice to the hymn of praise.

36b. Like a good servant I never leave their side.

37-38a. When Kaliyuga has come (the recital) will give servitude to the hymn (i.e. the hymn will be a servant). It is (i.e.) should not be given to any one indiscriminately for fear of the) violation of (the sacredness of) the Vedas. He will be rich with all his desired objects here (i.e. in this world) only.

38b-42a. O king, listen, I have made this hymn fruitful. It was fashioned (i.e. composed) by Brahmā. Formerly it was muttered by Rudra. He was free from (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Indra also was free from sin. So also were gods, sages, guhyas (a class of demigods), siddhas, and the immortal vidyādharas. The serpent-demons propitiated the hymn, and obtained the complete attainment as desired by them. The donor, who will mutter my hymn, will be meritorious and blessed here (i.e. in this world). No doubt should be raised in this matter. O best king, come to my abode with your wife.

42b-45. Hari supported the king with his hand. There (at that time) drums (were) sounded; gandharvas sang lovely songs. Best celestial nymphs danced. All gods and sages showered flowers. They praised him with hymns. Then the king, along with his wife, went to Viṣṇu. That Vijvala, with his mind delighted, saw him being praised by hosts of gods and siddhas. He, of a great prowess, came there where his father and mother were.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED

Vena Asks to Hear More about Kuñjala

Viṣṇu said:

1-8a. (Vijvala's) father (Kuñjala) lived on a bunyan tree on the beautiful bank of Narmadā. Vijvala too came there, and the very intelligent, religious-minded one narrated to his father the greatness of the hymn called Vāsudeva(-hymn). With a very much pleased mind he told him as to how Viṣṇu came there and gave him (i.e., Subāhu) an auspicious boon. Kuñjala also, having heard the account of that king, was full of great joy, and having embraced his son said: "O child, by narrating the very auspicious (hymn) of Vāsudeva (to the king) you have done a meritorious deed and an obligation to the noble king." Having thus spoken to his god-like son, having congratulated him with blessings, and having repeatedly praised him, he remained on the beautiful bank of the river, while Cyavana was beholding. O great king, I have told you all this account of those devotees of Viṣṇu. What else should I tell you ?

Vena said:

8b-12a. You have given me, through the vessel of a conch, nectar to drink. Therefore, which mortal on the earth will not have a strong desire to drink it? The knowledge about Viṣṇu is always the best drink here (i.e. on the earth). I am not satisfied when it is thus being narrated by you. O lord of gods, my strong desire to hear it increases. Through grace (i.e. be graceful and) tell me about the activities of Kuñjala. What did the noble one say to his fourth son? Please tell that to me in great detail.

The lord said:

12b-14. Listen, I shall tell you Kuñjala's account, so also Cyavana's account full of great religious merit. O best of men, this meritorious account destroys sins. The man who devoutly listens to it, would get the fruit of (having performed) a thousand sacrifices.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ONE

Kapiñjala's Narration

Sūta said:

1-2. Viṣṇu, the god of gods, told the best king, the son of Aṅga, the very meritorious account that destroys sins. Listen, I shall narrate to you the meritorious account, and also the account of the noble Kuñjala.

Viṣṇu said:

3-4a. And the pious Kuñjala with joy called his fourth son Kapiñjala, and said to him: "O son, tell me what wonder you saw. O best son, to which (forest) did you go for your food from here? Tell me, O blessed one, what very meritorious (event) you have seen.

Kapiñjala said:

4b-24. O father, I shall narrate to you the wonder about which you have asked, which no one has seen or heard (before) and which I have not heard from any one. I shall tell it just now. O father, listen to it now. May all (my) brothers listen to it. O mother, you (too) listen to it now. The mountain Kailāsa is the best one. It is white like the moon. It is full of many minerals, and is adorned with various trees. O father, it is washed all round with the auspicious, pleasing water of the Ganges. O father, from which (i.e. from that mountain) thousands of divine rivers of various kinds have arisen. So also various kinds (of streams of) water (have arisen from it). On the great mountain there are thousands of lakes containing water. On the best mountain there are large rivers which are resorted to by swans and cranes, which give religious merit and which destroy sins. There are various thickets of trees full of flowers and fruits, and also full of various trees, green and auspicious. (The mountain) is full of the groups of kinnaras, and is crowded with the celestial nymphs. It is well-adorned with gandharvas, siddhas, bards and hosts of gods. It is possessed of the thickets of divine trees; is full of divine objects; it is very rich with the loveliness of divine fragrances. It is very

beautiful on account of the white slabs of crystal. O king, it is full of the sun's rays and possesses brilliance. Everywhere it is adorned with trees full of flowers like sandal trees of agreeable fragrance, bukula trees with blue flowers. It is pleasant due to the good (i.e. sweet) notes of divine birds. It is pleasant due to the humming of bees and multitudes of trees. That mountain, along with the forest, looks splendid by the notes of cuckoos. There is a Śiva-temple, crowded with crores of Śiva's attendants; with rays (the mountain) was white and was auspicious; it was having auspicious slabs of a heap of virtue. It was on all sides resounding with roaring lions, with buffaloes and elephants; so also with the loud trumpets of the quarter-elephants. It was crowded with various (kinds of) deer and with monkeys. In the caves it was resounding (i.e. its caves were resounding) with the loud notes of peacocks. It was adorned with caves, plasterings and ridges and summits. It was full of many streams. It shone with herbs. It was divine, of a divine merit, and full of auspicious sites. The great mountain, the heap of merit was resorted to by pulindas, bhillas and kolas. The lord of mountains shone with frightful peaks and with huts; pure, auspicious and meritorious pleasures and a great sound of the streams of the water of the Ganges spread about.

25-26a. There (i.e. on the mountain) is the abode of Śaṅkara. To (that) Kailāsa I had gone. There I saw a wonder which was never seen or heard of (before). O father, listen to all that will be said by me.

26b-30. From the auspicious, highly rising peak of the lord of mountains (like that of Meru), a snowy, milky and golden stream flows (down) on the ground; and O glorious one, this stream of the Ganges adorned with (i.e. flowing with) a thundering sound has speedily reached the peak of Kailāsa and has expanded there. There is a great pool of water (in the stream) of the Ganges of the measure of ten yojanas. It shines with much auspicious and pure water. It has received auspiciousness from all sides and greatly shines with large swans. (It is auspicious because of) auspicious, divine, sweet utterance of the sāmans. The swans coo there, and by that (cooing) the lake looks splendid.

31-46. O you very intelligent one, on its bank on a slab of stone was seated Himālaya's daughter (i.e. Pārvatī) with her hair

let loose, and endowed with the wealth of beauty. She, well-endowed with a divine form, virtuous, of divine characteristics, and adorned with divine ornaments shone on its bank. I do not know whether she was the daughter of the lord of mountains (i.e. Pārvatī) or the daughter of the great ocean (i.e. Lakṣmī) or was Brahmā's wife (viz. Sarasvatī) or was Svāhā (the wife of Agni) or she was the illustrious Indrāṇī (i.e. the wife of Indra) or Rohiṇī (the spouse of the Moon). O father, by all means such wealth of beauty is not observed (in the case) of other very divine young females. Such marks of beauty, qualities and eharacter (that) were noticed in her, so also her body deluding the universe which I saw were not to be seen (even) in the celestial nymphs. That young girl, seated on a slab and full of grief, and (being) without many kinsmen, wept very melodiously. She shed many pearllike tears. The pure tears fell into the lake, O very intelligent ones. The drops (i.e. the tears), resembling pearls, fell into that great (mass of) water. From them arose lotuses which were charming and fragrant. O highly intelligent one, from the tears (that fell) from her eyes, lotuses were produced. Those innumerable (lotuses) floated in the water of the Ganges. The very pleasant ones speedily fell into the stream of the Ganges, well-resorted to by multitudes of swans. The stream of the Ganges has flowed out from that place. Reaching the top of Kailāsa, called Ratna and having pleasant caves, it is full of water and has extended over a couple of yojanas. It was crowded with groups of swans and full of aquatic birds. There are lotuses of many special colours in the pure stream resorted to by groups of sages. The lotuses which were produced from the tears in the morning were large and fragrant and floated in the pure stream of the Ganges full of water, which time and again resounded with the (notes of) beautiful swans and aquatic birds.

Sūta said:

47-53. O father, the great lord (Śiva called Ratneśvara), very venerable to gods and demons, always remains on that mountain called Ratna. O father, there I saw a sage full of religious merit, covered with a mass of matted hair, without any clothes and holding a staff. He was without any support, (lived) without food, was very weak due to penance, emaciated, (just) a bundle

of bones, and covered with skin only. The limbs of the noble one were powdered with ashes only. He, of a great penance, with an improper support and seated in devotion to Śiva would eat dry and withered leaves fallen (there). Bringing those fragrant lotuses from the water of the Ganges, he, the noble one, skilled in singing and dancing, would worship the god of gods, Ratneśvara (with them). The religious-minded one, coming to the temple and remaining at the door of the enemy of Tripura, sang and danced, and also wept melodiously.

54-57. O father, O best of speakers, this is the wonder that I saw. Through favour (i.e. being favourable to me) tell me the reason if you know it. O noble one, who is that girl? Why would (i.e. does) that man worship the great god (i.e. Śiva)? Tell me all that in detail, which is the cause of (my) doubt." The very intelligent Kuñjala, who was thus addressed by his son Kapiñjala, spoke to him, while the sage was listening.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWO

Aśokasundarī Is Born

Kuñjala said:

1-3. O child, now I shall explain to you all that you said: as to what their splendour originated from, O you best twice-born. Once the great goddess Pārvatī, the best among women, while sporting, said (these) words to the lord: "O great god, in my mind a great longing has sprung up. To me (please) show a grove that is best among groves."

Śrī Mahādeva said:

4. Let it be so, O great goddess. I shall show you the Nandana, crowded with gods and resorted to by brāhmaṇas and siddhas.

5-11a. Having thus spoken to that goddess, he, Mahādeva, was eager to go to Nandanavana itself with her and the atten-

dants. He, surrounded by crores of attendants, mounted his bull (i.e. Nandī) who was beautiful in all limbs, whose back was divine, who was endowed with ornaments, who was furnished with bells and garlands, who wore multitudes of small bells, who was well-decorated with chowries, silken threads and pearl-necklaces, who resembled a swan and the moon and who had pleasing characteristics. Nandī, Bhṛṅgī, Mahākāla, Skanda, Caṇḍa, Manohara, Vīrabhadra, Gaṇeśa, Puṣpadanta, Maṇīśvara, Atibala, Subala, Meghanāda, Ghaṭāvaha, Ghaṇṭākarṇa, Kālinda, Pulinda, Vīrabāhuka, Keśarīkiṅkara, Caṇḍahāsa, Prajāpatī—these and others like Sanaka, whose power was penance, (accompanied him).

11b-12. That Śiva was (thus) surrounded by attendants numbering crores. Mahādeva, accompanied by the attendants and the goddess entered Nandanavana only which was resorted to by gods and kinnaras.

13-36a. The lord of gods showed Pārvatī that beautiful Nandanavana which was rich with various trees, full of many flowers, which was charming, which was crowded with plantain-trees, and with campaka trees with flowers, with jasmine-creepers having abundant flowers, and full of a number of mālatī creepers, which always shone with branches full of flowers, and with excellent groves of pāṭala-trees, and with great sandal trees of pleasant fragrance. It was full of groves of devadāru trees, and crowded with tall trees, with sarala trees, coconut trees, also with betel-nut trees, with divine date-trees, bread-fruit trees, bent down with the loads of fruits, with trees exuding fragrance—thus it was full of big trees. It was well-adorned with saptaparṇa trees, resembling the lustre of fire. It was full of great rose-apple trees, nimba trees, and citron trees, with orange trees, sindhuvāra trees, priyāla trees, śāla trees and tinduka trees, udumbara trees, wood-apple trees, and was adorned with rose-apple trees. It was full of trees like mango, the king of fruits, Indian fig-trees resembling clouds, divine groves of dark-blue, also with groves of trees with unblown flowers. It was resorted to by (i.e. it contained) large tamāla trees resembling the sun. It was beautified by other trees all resembling dark-blue groves; it was adorned with very auspicious desire-yielding trees full of all desired fruits and giving auspicious fruits. It was full of sweet notes and cries of various

birds. It resounded with the auspicious cooings of cuckoos and with bees. It resounded with the notes of birds longing for honey. It was crowded with trees of many kinds and was full of many herds of deer. O son, that (piece of) land shines with various fragrant flowers fallen from trees it is; as it were worshipped with fragrant flowers. O son, there are very auspicious wells, pure with the fragrance of lotuses. They are full of water and are resorted to by swans and ducks. The great Nandana shines everywhere with lakes resembling seas and endowed with the fragrance of water, and with hosts of celestial nymphs. The lordly Nandana grove shines everywhere with halls, white pitchers, beautiful golden staffs, whitewashed palaces and with large hosts of kinnaras. That auspicious appearing Nandana shone everywhere with gandharvas, beautiful celestial nymphs, amusements of deities and with groups of sages and good meditating saints. Magnanimous Bhava (i.e. Śiva) of a great prowess along with that great goddess (Pārvatī) saw that glorious, auspicious Nandana, the abode of the meritorious, the mine of happiness and endowed with the quality of tranquility. In the Nandana grove also the beautiful desire-yielding tree endowed with desired flowers and fruits shone along with rays like masses of lustre of the sun. Seeing such lordly tree the goddess said to Śiva: "O lord, tell (me) the auspicious name of this all-meritorious tree". That Śiva, the great sun among all the luminaries around, said to the goddess:

Śiva said:

36b-39. The great position of this is known as auspicious; and Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) is the chief among gods. The divine river (i.e. the Ganges) is the chief among rivers. As the beautiful moon is the chief among those that are pleasant, as the earth is the chief among the elements, as the lord of elephants (i.e. Airāvata) is chief among elephants, as the ocean is the chief among reservoirs, as, O respectable lady, corn is the chief among herbs, as the Himālaya is the chief among the mountains, as metaphysical knowledge is the chief among lores, as the lord of men (i.e. a king) is the chief among all people, in the same way this lord of trees a welcome guest of all, is dear to the lord of gods.

Śrī Pārvatī said:

40-42. O Śambhu, tell me the auspicious and pure quality of this lord of trees.

Hearing the words of the goddess he told her everything about that good tree. (He said:) "This best tree called 'Kalpa-druma' gives to the very meritorious gods, those that resemble gods, and best gods, whatever they resolve. All auspicious objects are produced from this (tree). The very important gods, superior due to their penance, having obtained here only the very divine (object) full of gems, superior to life (even) which is difficult to get, enjoy it."

43-49. The goddess heard the wonderful words of Śiva. With his consent she mentally conceived a very virtuous and beautiful gem of a body. The Daughter of the Mountain obtained from that great tree a woman who was (so) lovely in all limbs, virtuous and beautiful that she, helping Cupid, had come to delude the universe. She was the treasure of sport; she was of the form of the accomplishment of happiness; she was endowed with everything; she was having large and lotus-like eyes; her face was lotus-like; her hands resembled lotuses; she was beautiful Lakṣmī; she was like a good figure of gold; like that her hair was clean and very bright in splendour, pleasantly bright, very curly and long, was very delicately tied and was covered with fragrant flowers. That young lady, with her hair tied, looked splendid with the firm knots of hair and excellent form. As on the boundary-line of the trees the line of the muktā-flowers shines, similarly on the parting line of her hair, a chaplet of pearls shone. At the root of the parting of hair of the very respectable lady there was a mark, like the bright preceptor of the demons (i.e. Venus) that had risen. On the brows were two lotuses. The lotus-like navel like that of a deer shone with its mass of lustre. The brilliance of the mark at the root of parting of hair displayed the wealth of her beauty in the good world; so also the pearls on her hair and forehead always spread out beauty.

50-52a. As the beautiful moon shines with lustre, so she of charming movements, shone. As the full moon, the mass of cool rays, shines with the canopy of the moonlight, in the same way

her face causing charm and celebrated in the universe, shone. Even the moon is having the spot, and losing the digits everyday, wanes; but her face, always joyful and spotless, is always full.

52b-54a. The lotus, having looked with disapproval at its own fragrance (and thinking)—'This lady with a lotus-like face and endowed with all virtues is fashioned with my properties'—did not then feel happy on seeing its own exuding fragrance. The wind (moving in) the world blew from her mouth. Being suddenly ashamed, it always remained in water after resorting to it.

54b-55. Some very intelligent people with their judgement restrained by their mind (i.e. after proper thought) said: 'O good Cupid, as the treasure of a king is full of the bits (i.e. gems) of the sea, in the same way, her mouth, looking charming with the bimba-like lower lip and with the charming smile, is looking charming with gem-like excellent teeth.'

56-64a. She had good eyebrows, her nose fine, her ears were adorned with jewels. Her cheeks having golden complexion, were possessed of brightness. The three lines existing on the neck shone very much. Here (i.e. on the neck) there were three lines with (i.e. respresenting) her good fortune, good character and love. Her breasts were hard, plump and resembled a round figure. They were pitchers of Cupid intended for sprinkling (water from). Her even shoulders looked very beautiful, and were in company of the heart. Her arms were good; they were round, soft, of a good complexion and possessed good marks. Her lotus-like hands were very even, had the colour of lotuses and were very cool. They were endowed with divine characteristics and possessed the marks of a lotus and swastika on them. Her fingers were straight, held lotuses and had nails. The nails were very sharp and were like drops of water. The complexion of her body resembled the interior of a lotus. Her (body) odour was like that of a lotus. The beautiful young lady looked splendid like Lakṣmī. The daughter of the tree was endowed with all good characteristics and was very beautiful. Her feet resembled red lotuses, were very soft, and very beautiful. The nails growing from the toes had the shape of the flashes (shooting) from gems.

64b-66. (Everything) as is laid down in the scientific works

(about beauty) was seen in her limbs. Her body looked beautiful due to all ornaments. She had put on a necklace, bracelets and anklets. She shone with the belt and girdle and with the sound of the (tinkling bells) of the girdle. The auspicious one attained great beauty by means of blue silken garment. She, endowed with qualities, (looked very beautiful) due to a divine and a very red bodice.

67. From the idea conceived by her, Pārvatī obtained an excellence—a great production. She obtained joy from the desire-yielding tree. She said (these) words to Śaṅkara:

68. "O god, I saw the tree as you had described it. As an object is conceived, so it is seen."

Sūta said:

69. Then that lady beautiful in all limbs came near their side (i.e. approached them) and with devotion saluted their lotus-like feet.

70. Then she spoke affectionate, pleasant and attractive words: "O lord, O mother, tell me the reason for which I was produced."

Śrī Devī (i.e. Pārvatī) said:

71-74. Through curiosity about the truth about the tree I conceived you. O good lady, the fruit, i.e. you, the wealth of beauty is instantly obtained. You are undoubtedly my daughter endowed with all good fortune. You will be known in the world as Aśokasundarī. Nahuṣa, lord of kings, well known in the lunar family, like god Indra, will be your husband.

The mountain's Daughter (viz. Pārvatī), thus gave her a boon and went with great joy, accompanied by Śaṅkara, to the Kailāsa mountain.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THREE

Aśokasundarī Is Saved and Āyu Gets Boon

Kuñjala said:

1-2. At that time Aśokasundarī was born as the best woman. She, of a charming smile, skilled in singing and dancing and enjoying all pleasures along with the very beautiful daughters of gods sported in the excellent, meritorious Nandana endowed with all desired objects.

3-4. Vipracitti's son Huṇḍa, who was always violent, impetuous and very lustful entered Nandana. After seeing Aśokasundarī, endowed with all ornaments, he was, at her sight, piereed by the arrows of Cupid.

5. He, of a huge body said to her: "O auspicious one, who are you? To whom do you belong? For what reason have you come to this excellent Nandana (garden)?"

Aśokasundarī said:

6. Now listen. I am the daughter of the very meritorious Śiva. I am the sister of Kārtikeya and the Mountain's Daughter (i.e. Pārvatī) is my mother.

7. Due to childhood (i.e. being a child) I have playfully reached the Nandana grove. Who are you? Why are you asking me like this ?

Huṇḍa said:

8-11. I am Vipracitti's son, endowed with good qualities and characteristics. I am well-known as Huṇḍa, haughty due to might and power. O you of a beautiful face, even among the demons I am the best, and there is no other demon like me among gods, in human worlds or in other worlds (like that) of serpents in respect of penance, glory in the family, or wealth and pleasures. O you of large eyes, on seeing you I have been struck by the arrows of Cupid. I have sought your refuge. Be pleased to favour me. Be my dear wife, dear to me like my own life.

Aśokasundarī said:

12-20. Listen, I shall tell you the cause of all contacts

between well-born men and women; so listen, O Huṇḍa, it is the way of the world in this mundane existence that the husband of a woman would be suitable to her in respect of virtues. There is a reason why I shall not be your worthy wife. O lord of the demon-kings, listen with a subdued mind. When I was born from the lord of trees, I was thought of by Pārvatī, after properly grasping Śiva's mind. With the god's consent, the goddess also produced my husband. He will be (born) in the lunar dynasty. He will be very intelligent and religious-minded. He will be a conqueror, and will resemble Jiṣṇu of (i.e. Viṣṇu or Arjuna) in valour, and will be like fire in brilliance. He will be omniscient, veracious, and will resemble Kubera in (point of) charity. He will be a sacrificer, a lord of charity (i.e. a great donor), and will be like Cupid in handsomeness. He will be named Nahuṣa, will be righteous and a great treasure of virtues and good character. He is given to me by the goddess (Pārvatī) and the god (Śiva). My husband will be famous. From him I shall obtain a handsome son, endowed with all good qualities. Due to the grace of Śiva, I shall obtain from him a son (named) Yayāti, resembling Indra and Viṣṇu, and dear to people in the world, and brave in battle.

21. O brave Huṇḍa, I am a loyal wife, and am especially the wife of someone else. Therefore, completely give up the wrong notion and go (away) from here.

22a. He just laughed and said (these) word to Aśokasundarī.

Huṇḍa said:

22b-30a. What you said (that) the goddess and the god (have given Nahuṣa as your husband) is not proper. That righteous one, named Nahuṣa will be (born) in the lunar dynasty. You are senior in age, so he who is younger is not fit (to be your husband). A younger woman is commended (to be the wife), and not a younger man (to be the husband). O good lady, when will that man be your husband? Freshness and youth will certainly perish. O you of an excellent complexion, beautiful women always become dear to men on the strength of their youth. O you of a beautiful face, youth is the great capital of women. Supported by it they enjoy pleasure and objects as desired by

them. O good lady, when will that son of Āyu come to you? Listen to me. Youth exists just (for) today. It will be useless (later). Listen, he will have to pass through conditions like living in the womb, childhood and adolescence. When will he be endowed with the splendour of youth and be fit for you? O you of large eyes, with the splendour of youth, drink an intoxicating drink. Enjoy happily with me.

30b-38. Hearing the words of Huṇḍa, Śiva's daughter, full of fright, again spoke to that lord of demons: "When the twentieth yuga called Dvāpara will come, the righteous Bala (i.e. Balarāma), the incrarnation of Śeṣa and son of Vasudeva, will take the divine daughter of Revata as his wife. O illustrious one, she is already born in the best yuga called Kṛta. She is older than he by the measure of three yugas. That Revatī has become dear to Bala (rāma) like his own life. When the future Dvāpara (yuga) will come, she will be born here. Formerly she was born as Māyāvatī, an excellent daughter of a gandharva. The best demon Śambara kidnapped and confined her. In that yuga, the best hero Pradyumna, the son of Mādhava, the lord of Yādavas, is declared to be her husband. He will be her husband. This future (event) is seen by ancient illustrious and noble (sages) like Vyāsa. Such are the words uttered about me by the goddess, the mother of the world, and the daughter of Himālaya, at that time, O demon.

39-42. And you, covetous through greed and passion are talking (words) which are wicked, full of sin, and without (i.e. not supported by) the Vedas and religious treatises. Whatever, good or bad is firmly ordained in the case of a person according to his former deeds, takes place in his case. If the words (that are) in the mouth of gods and brāhmaṇas come out and are true, they shall never be otherwise. This is ordained due to my destiny, and that of that Nahuṣa. Having thought of the union (of us two) like this only the goddess and Śiva also said (like that).

43-44. Realising this, be calm and give up the wrong notion haunting your mind. O demon, you shall certainly not be able to lead away my mind. I am a loyal wife, firm in mind; who can lead me away? I shall burn you with a great curse. O great demon, go from here."

45-48. Hearing these words of her, the mighty demon Huṇḍa thought in his mind (i.e. to himself): 'How would this one be my wife?' Thinking like this, the deceitful Huṇḍa vanished. Then leaving her and speedily going out from that place, the next day he came there fashioning illusion full of sin. O my son, the demon having taken up a divine, illusive form of a woman, became of the form of (i.e. turned himself into) a lady through illusion. That very beautiful young lady took up an illusory form. Engaged in laughing and sports she went to that place, where Śiva's daughter (i.e. Aśokasundarī) stayed.

49-50. As if affectionate (towards her) she said (these) words to Aśokasundarī: "O you blessed one, who are you? To whom do you belong? O young lady, why do you stay in the penance-grove and practise the penance drying up your passion? Tell me, O very fortunate one, for what reason (you are practising the penance) very difficult to practice."

51-53. Hearing those auspicious words uttered by the demon of an illusory form who had concealed his original form and who had a longing (for her), that lady, who was very much afflicted, quickly told him the account of her creation as it had formerly taken place, and also all the reason for (taking up) the penance. (She) also (told him about) the harassment done by that wicked demon. She did not recognize his illusory form, and (so) through affection she told him (everything).

Huṇḍa said:

54-57a. O respectable lady, you are a loyal wife, you are engaged in good vows. Your character and behaviour are good, your actions are pious, and you are a very chaste lady. O good lady, I am a loyal wife, and am devoted to my husband. I, a great chaste woman, am practising penance for my husband. That wicked Huṇḍa also killed my husband. For his destruction I am practising great (i.e. severe) penance. Come to my holy hermitage. I stay on the bank of the Ganges.

57b-62. That daughter of Śiva was addressed by her (i.e, Huṇḍa) with other charming and convincing words, and Huṇḍa, through friendly feeling, deluded her. Deluded through folly she was very speedily attracted by him. He brought her to his divine,

matchless and very beautiful house. O son, on the peak of Meru there is an excellent city, known as Vaidūrya, full of all good qualities, very auspicious and named Kāñcana. The entire city of the demon was thronged with tall palaces, with pitchers, staffs and chowries. It was full of dark-blue groves resembling clouds, and full of various trees, also with wells, pools and lakes and with rivers and reservoirs. It shone with great jewels and with ramparts furnished with gold, and rich in objects satisfying all desires.

63. That Aśokasundarī then saw that beautiful city. "O friend, rell me to which deity this place belongs."

64-65a. He said: "It belongs to that lord of demons whom you have seen before. It is the place of that demon. O illustrious one, I am that best demon. O you of an excellent complexion, through illusion (i.e. by deceiving you) I have brought you (here).

65b-67. (Thus) speaking to her he took her to his golden palace, full of many mansions, and resembling the peak of Kailāsa. He, oppressed by passion, seated that beautiful lady on a swing, took up his original form, and then the lord of the demons, afflicted by the arrows of Cupid, joined the palms of his hands, and said (these) words to her:

68-70. "O good lady, there is no doubt that I shall give you whatever you desire. Resort to me who, being oppressed by passion, am attached to you, O you of large eyes.

The respectable lady (i.e. Aśokasundarī) said:

O lord of demons, you cannot at all lead me astray. Do not even entertain in your mind the delusion about me that has come (to you). I am difficult to be secured by mean demons who are great sinners. There is no doubt about this. Do not talk (like this) again and again.

71-72a. That goddess, born after (i.e. younger sister of) Skanda, endowed with penance, burning with great rage, desiring to destroy that demon, and throbbing like the tongue of Death again spoke to that mean demon:

72b-79a. "O sinner, you have done a fierce deed for (i.e. leading to) the destruction of yourself, for (i.e. bringing about) the

destruction of your family and these your kinsmen. You have brought a burning, bright flame of fire to your house. As an inauspicious, deceitful bird, risen with all (kinds of) misery, brings about the destruction of the house of one whose house it enters, as that bird would desire the destruction of (the man's) kinsmen, all wealth and family also and (then) enter (the man's) house, in the same way, I, desiring your destruction, have come to your house. Undoubtedly I shall now destroy everything belonging to you—your wealth, grain, family, life, sons and grandsons etc. O demon, since you brought me who was practising a great (i.e. severe) penance, and who, longing for a husband, was desiring (to marry) Āyu's son, Nahuṣa, my husband will destroy you.

79b-88. Formerly (only) the god had (fore) seen this remedy in my case. This popular verse, (which) the wise sing, is true. It is actually observed in the world; the wicked-minded do not realize it. There is no dout that one who is to experience pain, pleasure etc. from one does experience it from that very person. You will go to (man). With one's finger-tip one touches a very sharp, fine-edged, good sword. Now know (that touching) me like that would cause anger (in me). Who, being rash and going to a lion who is angry and roaring loudly, would clip the hair from his face? He, who longs for death, desires to enjoy me, who am of a truthful conduct, restrained and remaining in (i.e. practising) penance. He, now, since he is prompted by Death, desires to seize the gem of a black, living cobra; and you, deluded by Death, are sent by Death, O fool. Therefore such wicked thought is produced (in your mind). Do you not realise it? Except the son of Āyu, who looks (i.e. would look at me)? Any other (man than Āyu's son) will die by looking at my form."

89-92. She, who was a chaste lady, who was grieved, who was disturbed with distress, who was controlled, and was observing a religious vow, spoke like this and went to the bank of the Ganges. "Formerly, I, who had practised a severe penance with a desire for (obtaining) a groom, will again, desiring your destruction, practise a hard penance. I shall then go to my husband, when I shall see you, killed by the magnanimous

Nahuṣa with sharp arrows like thunderbolt and resembling serpents, (and see you) the sinner, fallen on the battlefield, with your hair loose, and with blood (oozing from your body)."

93-94. Having made such a great vow for the destruction of Huṇḍa, that firm daughter of Śiva resorted to the excellent bank of the Ganges. As bright, burning flame of fire, full of brilliance would burn the great worlds, the daughter of the lord of gods, burning with rage, practised, on the bank of Ganges, a penance difficult to practise.

Kuñjala said;

95-96. O noble one, having thus spoken, Śiva's daughter, having bathed in the water of the Ganges, went to her own city, called Kāñcana. That young Aśokasundarī, of a slim body, and endowed with truthfulness, practised penance to bring about the death of Huṇḍa.

97-98. Huṇḍa also, with his heart burnt by the curse became afflicted, and, being very much tormented by the fire of words, thought. Having called his minister named Kampana, he said to him. He told him the important news of her curse:

99-100. "I have been cursed by Aśokasundarī, the good daughter of Śiva: 'You will die at the hands of my husband, Nahuṣa.' That child is not (as yet) born; but Āyu's wife is carrying. Act in such a way that the curse would be false."

Kampana said:

101-104. Having kidnapped the wife of Āyu bring her (here). In this way your enemy will not be born. Or, with strong (medicines) cause her abortion. In this way also your enemy will not be born. Mark the time of the birth of that wicked Nahuṣa. Having carried him away, bring him (here) and kill him of a sinful mind.

Having thus held consultation with that Kampana, the demon (Huṇḍa) exerted himself to destroy Nahuṣa.

Viṣṇu said:

105-108. The glorious, righteous son of Aila, named Āyu,

the ornament of the Soma family, the best king and the sovereign emperor knowing all practices, engaged in the vow of truthfulness, resembling Indra and Viṣṇu, ruled under one umbrella (i.e. ruled as the universal sovereign) by means of penance, glory, might, charity, sacrifices, meritorious acts and restraint on the earth. The king (Āyu) did not have a son. So he was unhappy. The righteous one thought: 'How can a son be born to me (i.e. How can I have a son)?'

109. Āyu, the lord of the earth, entertained such a thought. Being composed, he made a great effort for getting a son.

110-113. Atri's son Dattātreya, the high-souled brāhmaṇa, the great sage, with his eyes red due to (having drunk) spirituous liquor, was sporting with a woman. The virtuous one, intoxicated by wine, having seated a young, auspicious woman, best of all women, on his lap, sang, danced and heavily drank liquor. The best among the great meditating saints, the best sage, (who was) without a sacred thread, (and) with his body smeared with sandal and aloe wood paste, shone with divine garlands of flowers and appendages of pearl-necklaces.

114-118. The king, having gone to his hermitage, and seeing the best brāhmaṇa and being well-composed saluted him with his head (bent down), and falling prostrate before him. That pious son of Atri having seen that best king who had come before him with devotion, resorted to meditation. O best one, the king passed a hundred years like this. Having called him who was steady and calm and greatly devoted, he said these (words): "O king, why do you torment yourself? I am void of brāhmaṇic practices. I never had brāhmaṇahood. I am greedy of wine and flesh, and always attached to women. I do not have power to give a boon. (Please) serve (some) other brāhmaṇa."

Āyu said:

119-123. O glorious one, there is no other best brāhmaṇa like you, who grants all desired objects and are the greatest lord in the three worlds. O you illustrious one, you are Viṣṇu, the Garuḍa-bannered one, the highest lord, (born) in the family of Atri in the form of a brāhmaṇa. O chief of the lords of gods, O highest lord, I salute you. O you who are affectionate to those

who submit themselves to you, I have sought your refuge. O Hṛṣīkeśa, emancipate me. You stay (i.e. take pleasure in) causing illusion. I know you to be one who knows the beings living in the universe, who is the chief of the universe, who is the lord of the world and the killer of (the demon) Madhu. O Govinda, O you of a universal form, protect me only. My salutation to you.

Kuñjala said:

124-128. When a long time of many days passed, Dattātreya, in an intoxicated condition, said to the best king: "Do as I tell you. Give me wine in a cup; and the meal of flesh that is got cooked." Hearing those words of him, that Āyu, the lord of the earth, being eager, speedily got wine in a cup, and quickly cut off well-cooked flesh with his hand, and, O best one, the best king gave these to Dattātreya. That best sage became happy in mind. Seeing (Āyu's) devotion, prowess and great service to the preceptor, he spoke to that humble Āyu, the lord of kings:

129. "Well-being to you, O king, ask for a boon that is difficult to be obtained on the earth. I shall now give you everything that you desire."

The king said:

130-135. O best sage, through pity for me you are truly granting (me) a boon. Give me a son endowed with virtues, omniscient, possessed of good qualities, having the might of gods, and unconquerable by gods and demons, kṣatriyas, giants, fierce demons and kinnaras. (He should be) devoted to gods and brāhmaṇas, and (he should) especially look after his subjects. (He should be) sacrificer, lord of charity (i.e. the best donor), brave, affectionate to those who seek his refuge, a donor, an enjoyer, magnanimous and learned in Vedas and sacred treatises, skilled in Dhanurveda (i.e. archery), and well-versed in sacred precepts. His intellect (should be) unbeaten; he (should be) brave and undefeated in battles. He should possess such qualities, be handsome and one from whom the race would come forth. O illustrious one, give me (such) a son sustaining my family, if you, through grace, want to give me another boon, O lord.

Dattātreya said:

136-138. Let it be so, O glorious one. You will have a son, in your mansion, who will be meritorious, will perpetuate your race and show compassion to all living beings. He will be endowed with these virtues, and with a portion of Viṣṇu. He, the lord of men, will be a sovereign emperor, comparable to Indra.

Having thus given him a boon, the great meditating saint gave the king an excellent fruit and said to him: "Give this to your wife." Saying so, and dismissing that Āyu, who had bent before him, after having congratulated him with blessings, he disappeared."

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOUR

Indumatī's Dream

Kuñjala said:

1-4. When that illustrious great sage Dattātreya had left, that great king Āyu came (back) to his own city. Being delighted, he entered Indumatī's house endowed with glory, rich with all desired objects and resembling Indra's house. O best brāhmaṇa, like Indra in heaven, the intelligent one ruled with Indumatī, the daughter of Svarbhānu, over his kingdom. By the words of Dattātreya, that queen Indumatī conceived a child endowed with divine lustre as a result of eating the fruit.

5-14. O illustrious one, Indumatī saw, at night accompanied by day (i.e. in the early morning), an excellent dream giving many auspicious objects. (She saw in the dream) a man, who was a brāhmaṇa, resembling the sun, endowed with necklace of pearls, and adorned with a white garment, entering her house. A garland fashioned with white flowers shone round his neck. His body looked charming with all ornaments, and was besmeared with divine sandal (-paste). He had four hands, he had a conch in his hand, and held a mace, a disc and a sword. He, of a great lustre, adorned with divine ornaments, shone with an umbrella,

resembling the orb of the moon, which was held (over him). He appeared handsome with a necklace, bracelets, armlets and anklets. He (also) shone with ear-rings resembling the orb of the moon. A very wise man like this came (there). Having called Indumatī, he repeatedly bathed the beautiful lady with milk, with (i.e. from) a conch full of milk and having the colour like that of the moon and decked with gems and gold. He threw (i.e. put) into her mouth a white, beautiful snake, covered with a thousand hoods, endowed with a gem and full of bright flames. On her neck he also put a pearl. That very glorious lord of gods then gave a lotus into Indumatī's hand and went to his own place.

15. Like this she saw a great dream and the best son. The illustrious one narrated it to Āyu, the lord of kings.

16-17a. Having heard it, the great king thought again. Then having called his preceptor Śaunaka, the very glorious, omniscient and best among the learned, narrated the best dream to him.

The king said :

17b-18a. O illustrious one, O best brāhmaṇa, today, (late) in the night, my wife saw (in a dream) a brāhmaṇa entering the house. What is the meaning of this dream ?

Śaunaka said :

18b-23. Formerly intelligent Dattātreya gave you a boon; and directed (you to give) a very effective fruit to the queen for (obtaining) a son. What have you done with the fruit, O king ? To whom have you given it ?

Having heard the words uttered by the king, viz. "I have given it to my good wife," the very intelligent, best brāhmaṇa Śaunaka said: "There is no doubt that, due to Dattātreya's grace, the best son, possessed of a portion of Viṣṇu will be born in your house. O king, I have told you this meaning of the dream. A son of a divine power, and resembling Indra and Viṣṇu will be born (in your house). Your son will be the soul of all good practices and will perpetuate the lunar dynasty. He will be proficient in the science of archery and the (Ṛg-) Veda (etc.)".

24. Having spoken thus to the king, Śaunaka went home. The king, with his wife, was full of great joy.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIVE

Nahuṣa is Born

Kuñjala said :

1-3a. With her friends she went to Nandana garden to sport (there). There she heard significant words, not wholesome to her father, of the bards and siddhas talking delightfully, viz. 'In the house of Āyu, the best son, of great might, resembling Viṣṇu in valour will be born; he will kill Huṇḍa'.

3b-4. Having heard such significant, unwholesome, painful words, she went (to her father) and told the painful words to her father in brief.

5-14. She narrated them to her father. The father, hearing them, was amazed. He remembered the curse of Aśokasundarī, given by her formerly. For this that Aśokasundarī practised penance. That demon who is wicked, who is dragged by Death, who is sinful, looking out for a flaw, always exerted to destroy the embryo of Indumatī. O noble one, when he saw the queen endowed with beauty and generosity, possessed of divine lustre, protected by Viṣṇu's lustre, having divine brilliance and resembling the sun's orb, he always remained by her side to watch her. From a distance the wicked demon showed her many spells and very fearful terrors and scares. She, endowed with the lustre of the child in the womb, was (thus) protected by Viṣṇu's lustre. Never again fear arose in her mind. The demon became ineffectual, and his exertion was useless. The desired object of the wicked Huṇḍa never came about. A hundred years thus passed while he was watching. That daughter of Svarbhānu gave birth to a son. At night only a son was born to her, O best son. Like the sun in the sky he very much shone with brilliance.

Sūta said :

15-18a. There was a very wicked maid in the lying-in-chamber. She was of a wicked behaviour and talked very inauspicious words. Knowing everything about her the mean demon Huṇḍa entered her body and then got into the house of Āyu. When the multitude of men, very much deluded by sleep, was asleep, he kidnapped that son, resembling a child of a god, and

went out. The mean demon reached his own city called Kāñcana.

18b-20. Having called his wife Vipulā, he said (these) words to her : "Kill this very sinful child, my enemy. Then hand it over to the cook for (cooking) a meal. Get it carefully cooked in many kinds and varieties. Later I shall undoubtedly eat it from the hand of (i.e. served by) the cook."

21-22. Having heard (these) words of her husband, Vipulā was wonderstruck. 'Why does my very rough husband become so cruel ? Whose boy, endowed with all good marks, and resembling a god's child, should he, bereft of forgiveness and full of cruelty, eat, and for what reason ?'

23-24. She, full of pity, thought like this, she again asked her husband, "Why do you (want to) eat the boy ? Why do you become so much angry and shameless ? O lord of demons, tell me in truth the entire motive."

25-27. That wicked Huṇḍa told her in brief his own fault, the account, and (about) the curse of Aśokasundarī. She understood the full motive of the demon. 'This boy must be killed, otherwise my husband will die'. Thinking like this, Vipulā, overcome with anger, called her female-attendant Mekalā, and said to her :

28-33. "Mekalā, today kill this very wicked child in the kitchen; (and) hand it over to the cook, (to cook it) for the meal of Huṇḍa". Mekalā took the child, and calling the cook, said to him : "Obey the order of the king. Today cook this child." The noble cook heard like this and taking the child in his hand became ready, raising a weapon (to kill the child). This child, the son of Āyu, was protected by the lustre of Dattātreya, the god of gods. He again and again laughed. Seeing him laughing the cook was full of compassion. The female attendant also was full of pity and said to the cook : "O you very intelligent cook, do not at all kill this child. In whose good family is he, endowed with divine marks, born ?'

The cook said :

34-42a. O you good one, you have spoken the truth, full of pity. Whose is this child, endowed with royal marks ? Why will that wicked-minded, mean demon, Huṇḍa eat him ? He, who

has protected his family by means of good deeds in calamities, would live even in difficult (circumstances). This cannot be otherwise. He who is assisted by his deeds would undoubtedly live even if he is carried by the force (of the stream) of a great river or even if he has been in fire. Therefore, deeds united with piety and merit are performed. Due to that men having a long life, call it happiness. (One's) deed is one's savior and guardian. It protects and is awake. It always gives salvation and an occasion for friendship. There is no doubt that a deed always protects him only, who does a propitious deed connected with charity and merit, accompanied by agreeable words, and full of obligation. Urged by his own deed he goes to (i.e. is born in) another stock. What can a father do or what can a mother or other kinsmen and relatives do? They cannot protect him who is struck down by his deed.

Sūta said ;

42b-48a. By that deed only, by which the son of Āyu was protected, the cook, being under the influence of fate, became full of pity. Urged by his deed that female attendant also became like that. Both of them protected Āyu's son of good marks. That female servant of meritorious deeds took him from that house to Vasiṣṭha's holy hermitage that night only. Placing the excellent child (there), she then went (back) to her house. Having killed a black antelope the cook cooked (its) flesh. The lord of demons, Huṇḍa, after eating deemed the curse of Aśokasundarī to be fruitless. That lord of demons, Huṇḍa, was then full of great joy.

Kuñjala said :

48b-54. When it was the bright morning, the best religious-minded sage, Vasiṣṭha, went out of the door of his hut made of leaves, and seeing the whole, beautiful child, endowed with divine marks, like the full moon, and of charming eyes,

Vasiṣṭha said :

All you sages should come and see the child. Whose (child) is it? Who brought it to the courtyard at my door at night?

The sages may see the child, resembling a child of a god or of a gandharva, and resembling crores of Cupids.

All those best brāhmaṇas full of great curiosity and delighted, saw that son of that noble Āyu. That pious Vasiṣṭha, seeing the son of the noble Āyu, knew through his (supernatural) knowledge, the boy to be the son of the magnanimous Āyu, and endowed with (good) conduct and also knew the account of that wicked and evil-minded Huṇḍa.

55-60a. When that best brāhmaṇa, Brahmā's son, picked up the boy with his hands through pity (for him), gods showered flowers on the boy. Gandharvas and kinnaras sang charmingly and melodiously. Sages praised that king's son with Vedic hymns. Seeing him, Vasiṣṭha granted him a boon at that time. "Your name will be famous in the world as Nahuṣa. Due to your childlike feelings, you were not destroyed by him. Therefore your name will be Nahuṣa, and you will be honoured[1] by gods." The best brāhmaṇa (i.e. Vaṣiṣṭha) performed the ceremony at his birth, and taught him vows, charity and sent him away as a pupil to the teacher.

60b-64. Having fully studied as a student the Vedas with the six limbs and with the pada and krama[2] (ways of reciting them), having studied all the sacred books from Vasiṣṭha, the best brāhmaṇa, archery with its secrets, and (the use of) divine weapons and missiles, along with the manner in which they are held and released, and the excellences like various branches of knowledge, science of logic, politics that handsome and devoted son of Āyu thus became fully accomplished. Due to the grace of Vasiṣṭha, he became the holder of (i.e. skilful in using) a bow and arrows.

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1. Huṣita—The word is not clar.

2. Padakrama—*Pada* is the detachment of the Vedic words from one another and *Krama* is the particular manner of reciting Vedic text.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIX

Indumatī's Lamentations on the Loss of Her Child

Kuñjala said :

1-2. The glorious wife of Āyu, Svarbhānu's daughter of an excellent complexion, not seeing that excellent, matchless child, resembling a god, wept, making a loud wailing : "Who has taken away may son of excellent marks, endowed with good characteristics.

3-4. I had obtained the son by penance, charity, sacrifices, and vows difficult to practise, and with hard efforts. Who has kidnapped the son given to me by the magnanimous, pious Dattātraya, (after) being pleased." (Thus) she wept piteously.

5-9. "O son, O child, O dear child, O habitation of virtues, where are you ? Who has taken you away? Talk to me. You are undoubtedly the ornament of the entire lunar dynasty. Who has taken you away, you united with my life ? Who has today kidnapped my son, full of divine, good marks of a king and having lotus-like eyes ? What shall I do ? Where shall I go ? I distinctly know the deed I did in the previous existence: I (must) have repudiated a deposit; therefore my son is kidnapped. Or did I, a sinner, cheat someone in the former existence ? I am suffering a calamity due to that deed only, and not otherwise (i.e. not due to anything else).

10. I had become the snatcher of a gem. (Therefore) the gem in the form of my divine son, the mine of matchless virtues, is snatched away by destiny.

11. Or did I argue with a brāhmaṇa ? (And) is it the fruit, attended by the great grief for my son, of that act, that I have undoubtedly got ?

12. Or did I obstruct a child in my previous existence? Am I getting such a fruit of that sinful deed?

13. Or did I not give the food before the rite of the offering of food to all gods accompanied by the (seven) sacred utterances, to one who had asked for it ?"

14-15. Thus, O noble one, Svarbhānu's daughter Indumatī full of tenderness due to grief, being perturbed and heaving sighs like a cow bereft of her calf, fainted.

16. That king Āyu (also) was full of great grief and sorrow. Hearing that the boy was kidnapped the king gave up courage.

17. 'There is certainly no fruit of penance, nor is there the fruit of giving gifts, since my son has been thus kidnapped.

18-19. Through grace, Dattātreya formerly gave me a boon (in the form) of an unconquerable son, endowed with success and all virtues. How is that grant of boon impeded ?' Engrossed in thought like these, the king who was distressed, wept very much.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVEN

Nārada Assures of Nahuṣa's Return

Kuñjala said :

1-2. Then that Nārada came from heaven to king Āyu. Having come he said to him : "O king, why are you bewailing? O great king, O very intelligent one, knowing that the kidnapping of your son is beneficial to gods and others, do not bewail.

3-4. Being omniscient, virtuous, and equipped with all worldly knowledge, and full of (i.e. endowed with) all arts, your son wilt come (back). O great king, he who has taken away the boy, having virtues like those of a god, to his house, has certainly taken Death.

5. He, of a great valour and might, will bring about his end. O king, along with Śiva's daughter he will come to you.

6. Due to his own lustre the son will be like Indra and Viṣṇu. Due to his righteous acts he will enjoy the position of Indra."

7. Speaking like this to king Āyu that best divine sage suddenly left as the king with his servants was seeing.

8. When that holy Nārada, resembling a god, had gone, Āyu came to that queen and told her all that (Nārada had said).

9-15. (He said :) "O queen, due to Viṣṇu's grace, Dattātreya gave you, the auspicious one, a son, (like) the best god. O

you of an excellent face (i.e. O you beautiful one), my virtuous son will again come back, taking (with him) the head of that one who has kidnapped him. Nārada told (me) like this. O good one, do not grieve; and give up this great delusion of your mind which destroys the (fruit of the) good works that ought to be done." Hearing the words of her husband, queen Indumatī, was full of joy (due) to the (assurance of the) coming of her son. 'It shall be as is told by the divine sage. Dattātreya has given me the son, who will be ageless and immortal. There is no doubt about it. It appears to me like this about him.' Thinking like this, she saluted the best brāhmaṇa. "My salutation to that noble son of Atri, the giver of great prosperity, by whose grace I obtained a very wise, very virtuous and very meritorious son."

16. Speaking like this, that respectable lady, who was very much afflicted, knowing that son Nahuṣa would come back, ceased (speaking).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHT

Vasiṣṭha's Instruction to Nahuṣa

Kuñjala said :

1. Brahmā's son Vasiṣṭha, of great lustre and the best among the speakers, called that Nahuṣa and spoke these words (to him).

2. "Quickly go to the forest, and bring many sylvan products." Hearing the words of the sage, Nahuṣa came (i.e. went) to the forest.

3-4. There that mighty Nahuṣa heard some good (i.e. agreeable) account : "This is that pious and mighty Nahuṣa, the very wise son of Āyu, separated from his mother (right) from his childhood. Due to a great (i.e. painful) separation from him, the wife of Āyu is weeping.

5. Aśokasundarī practised a very difficult penance. When will that virtuous queen Indumatī see her son named Nahuṣa,

conversant with the practice of righteosuness, and formerly kidnapped by the demons ?

6-7. For the sake of Āyu's son the excellent, young daughter of Śiva i.e. Aśokasundarī practised, all alone, penance. When will she be united with this one (i.e. Nahuṣa) ?"

8-13. That pious Nahuṣa, full of doubt, heard such worldly words uttered by bards in the sky. Having takens ylvan products, having gone to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage, having presented the sylvan products to pious Vasiṣṭha, and having joined the palms of his hands and with his neck devoutly bent down, he said to that wise Vasiṣṭha, the best among the ascetics : "Revered sir, listen to the words formerly uttered by a spy : 'This is Āyu's son, named Nahuṣa, who has been separated from his mother, Indumatī, by the very troublesome demons. That young daughter of Śiva practised very difficult penance for (obtaining) this wise Nahuṣa (as her husband).' O preceptor, I heard all this that they talked.

14-16a. Who is that pious Āyu ? Who is that virtuous Indumatī ? Who is that Aśokasundarī ? Who is called Nahuṣa? This is a doubt in my mind. You please dispel it. (Nahuṣa seems to be) some other very wise person. Where is that Nahuṣa? Tell me all that, O father and other things also (if any)."

Vasiṣṭha said:

16b-18a. That pious Āyu is a king, the mighty ruler of the earth. His wife is Indumatī, of a truthful nature and famous. On her, you, a son, abode of virtues and ornament of the lunar dynasty, were begotton by Āyu, the king of kings.

18b-22a. Śiva's beautiful, amiable daughter, adorned with virtues and form, and of a charming smile, by name Aśokasundarī, all alone practised penance in a penance-grove to obtain him (as her husband). The creator has fittingly and definiteely fashioned you as her husband. She practised profound meditation after resorting to the bank of the Ganges. Huṇḍa, the lord of demons, seeing that chaste, lovely lady with lotus-like eyes, and bright with penance, and endowed with beauty, generosity and virtues, all alone, was very much tormented by Cupid's arrows.

22b-26a. Going near her, he said to her : "Be my wife." Hearing these words of him, that devout lady said to him : "O Huṇḍa, do not do a rash act; do not talk like this again and again. O hero, you cannot get me, especially (when I am) someone else's wife. Destiny has formerly fashioned for me (i.e. as my husband) Āyu's son named Nahuṣa. There is no doubt that that very lustrous, intelligent Nahuṣa, a divine gift, will be (my husband). If you do otherwise (i.e. other than what I tell you), I shall give you a curse by which you will be reduced to ashes."

26b-33a. Hearing these words of her, he, very much tormented by Cupid's arrows, cunningly kidnapped her and took her to his own house. Having come to know about it she cursed that mean demon, O glorious one : "You will die at the hands of Nahuṣa." When you were not born (i.e. before your birth) she was born, as you are (now) telling. O hero, you are that son of Āyu, who was kidnapped by the sinful Huṇḍa, who was protected by the cook, and was sent to my hermitage through the female attendant. O child, I have again told you what the bards and kinnaras had made (you) hear (i.e. described) in the forest on seeing you. Kill that mean demon Huṇḍa, the doer of evil things; and wipe off the tears (of your mother who is) shedding them from her eyes. From here go to the bank of the Ganges and (you will) see the very mighty one (there). Having killed the lord of the demons, bring (her) from his gaol. Be the husband of her who is (known as) Aśokasundarī.

33b-35. I have told you all this—the origin of this question.

Speaking (thus) to Nahuṣa, the very intelligent brāhmaṇa ceased (speaking). Having heard all that wonderful (account) told by that sage, the son of Āyu, thinking and desiring to kill him, became angry.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINE

Vidvara, a Kinnara, Dispels Aśokasundarī's Apprehensions

Kuñjala said:

1-4. Having saluted, having propitiated and having taken the leave of Vasiṣṭha he, an archer, with arrows in his hand, went out (to the forest). Having well cooked the flesh of a black antelope that child, the good, virtuous, handsome son of Āyu, resembling a god, and endowed with godly qualities, was cleverly protected by her (i.e. that female attendant). With that meat which was well cooked, well dressed, boiled and tasty, the cook very gladly fed that wicked (demon) after talking to him. The demon ate that tasty and sweet meat. He was full of joy also. He went to Aśokasundarī.

5-6. With his mind overcome with passion he quickly said to her : "O auspicious one, your husband, Āyu's son, has been eaten up by me. O you of a charming body, resort to me only, and enjoy pleasures as desired by you. What will you do with that human being that is (already) dead?"

7-8a. Having heard (these words) the helpless daughter of Śiva replied : "The ageless and faultless husband is given to me by deities. Even the magnanimous gods have not perceived his death."

8b-10a. Hearing these words of (i.e. spoken by) her, that demon of wicked deeds, repeatedly laughing, said to her : "O beautiful lady, today only I ate up the flesh of the wicked Nahuṣa, Āyu's son, as soon as he was born."

10b-12. She, having heard these words, became extremely and fearfully angry. She who (always) stood by truth, and was purified by penance said : "With my mind restrained, I have practised penance. Āyu's son shall truly live long. O you of wicked deeds, if you desire to live, go from here. Otherwise, I will again curse you."

13-15. These (words addressed) by her to the king were heard by the cook. (He said :) "O great king, leave her, and resort to someone else." The wicked-hearted demon, Huṇḍa, directed by him quickly went out to his own wife. He did not at

all know the thing which the female attendant and the cook had done. He told the whole account to his wife.

Sūta said :

16-22a. That helpless Aśokasundarī, thinking about her dear lover and tormented by grief and sorrow, became emaciated due to that great (i.e. severe) penance. Repeatedly she thought: 'What would the demons, who know the means, not cleverly do by various means, and by exertion ? The best demons always live in various states of being. By the application of illusory methods I was formerly kidnapped by the demon. Like that the son of Āyu might have been killed. Thinking that luckily he might have been unharmed, he would even observe with great effort whether he has or has not perished. Is the exertion superior ? Or is the fruit of deeds superior ? How would an object, that is to be, perish ? Thence the Veda stands firmly. The speciality is conceived by gods. How will it be otherwise ?'

22b-24. The noble one again and again thought like this. (At that time) a kinnara named Vidvara, belonging to a great family, having a large body, having half human body (but) without wings, having two hands, and a flute in one hand, adorned with necklaces and bracelets, with his body besmeared with divine sandal (-paste), came (there) with his wife.

25-37. He said to that unhappy daughter of Śiva : "O respectable lady, what are you thinking about ? Know me, who have come here, to be Vidvara, a kinnara and Viṣṇu's devotee, sent by best gods. You need not at all be sorry about Nahuṣa. That sinful Huṇḍa has done every act to kill that intelligent (Nahuṣa); and O auspicious one, he has kidnapped Āyu's son (i.e. Nahuṣa); but he has been protected by the gods by various means. O you auspicious one of large eyes, Huṇḍa thinks like this : 'I have kidnapped Āyu's son and have eaten him up.' That mean demon left after having told you (like this). That your very glorious husband will live due to the ripening of his own deeds and merit earned in his former existence. O glorious one, the wicked, very sinful killers, contaminating others' lustre, everyday show forth to destroy the glory of those to destroy whose life produced due to the strength of their merit earned by themselves (in the former existence), they desire. By many means like poison and

weapons they then desire to kill the meritorious person protected by means of meritorious deeds. O glorious one, the great sinners like Huṇḍa harass, with many kinds of delusions and obstructions, full of power, the meritorious one, who is well-protected by the employment of (i.e. because of his having done) good deeds and religious merit. O auspicious one, means—like amulets, spells, charms, weapons, fire, poison, binding—become useless. (Deities) protect the magnanimous one who is (already) well protected by divine merit. The doers of (charms etc.) are reduced to ashes, (while), he, the meritorious one, remains (unharmed).

38-47. O auspicious one, all deities are the protectors of Āyu's son. He is the store of religious merit and the treasure of penance. Therefore the brave Nahuṣa, the best among the mighty, is protected by means of that truthfulness, panance, merit, controls and restraints. Do not have agonizing pain; give up your groundless sorrow. The religious-minded one is living in a forest even without his mother and father. He lives alone in a forest, (is) looked after by ascetics. He knows the philosophy of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas and has mastered archery. O you of a beautiful (i.e. slender) waist, as the moon shines with his digits and lustre, he is shining with his arts. He, the killer of his brave enemies, the killer of his foes and dear to gods, shines by means of his lores, great religious merit, penance and glory also. He will have you after killing Huṇḍa, the lord of demons. The great devotee will be the sole ruler of the earth along with you, as Indra is in heaven. O auspicious one, from him you will obtain a good son, resembling Indra, knowing Dharma, eagerly engaged in protecting his subjects, named Yayāti; also a hundred daughters endowed with beauty, generosity and (other) virtues, due to whose merit you will go to Indra's heaven. O you respectable lady, Nahuṣa of a virtuous valour will enjoy Indra's position.

48-54. Your son will be religious-minded Yayāti, the great king, protector of the subjects and very kind to all beings. He will have four sons of great prowess, endowed with strength and valour and masters of archery : The first will be Turu, the second will be Puru, the third will be Uru, and the fourth will be brave Yadu. Like this, the sons will be very brave, lustrous, very

powerful, noble, and endowed with full lustre. Yadu's sons will be brave, valourous like lions. Well-being to you. Now listen to their names when I am telling them to you : Bhoja, Bhīmaka and Andhaka and Kuñjara also. (The fifth one) will be Vṛṣṇi by name, religious-minded and prop of truth. The sixth will be Śrutasena, and the seventh will be Śrutadhara. (The eighth will be) Kāladamṣṭra, very powerful, mighty and conqueror of (even) Death in a battle.

55-60. O you of an excellent face, Yadu's sons called Yādavas will be very brave. They will have thousands of sons and grandsons. O respectable lady, such will be the dynasty of Nahuṣa. Thus giving up sorrow, proceed happily. O you of an auspicious face, having killed the demon Huṇḍa, your very wise husband will come (to you) and will marry you. Hot tears due to grief fall from the eyes of Indumatī. He, the remover of the pride (of the haughty), will wipe them. Having made his father happy he will protect his subjects. O auspicious one, I have told you all this that the gods had said. Giving up your grief and sorrow, carry on happily."

Aśokasundarī said :

61. If he is ordained to be my husband by the deities when will he come ? O you who know Dharma, tell me the truth; increase my happiness.

Vidvara said :

62. O beautiful lady, listen. You will soon see your husband.

Speaking like this, the gandharva (? kinnara) went to the abode of gods.

63. Aśokasundarī, the daughter of Śiva, giving up desires, anger and greed, practised penance there only.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TEN

Nahuṣa Gets Divine Weapons from Gods

Kuñjala said:

1-3. Having taken leave of all the sages and of Vasiṣṭha, the best of the ascetics, Nahuṣa being eager desired to go to the demon. Then all the sages like Vasiṣṭha, with penance as their treasure, congratulated the very mighty son of Āyu with blessing. All the deities in the sky joyfully beat drums and showered flowers on Nahuṣa's head.

4-5. Then the thousand-eyed god (i.e. Indra) came there with gods and gave him weapons and missiles resembling the sun's lustre. O best twice-born, the best king took those divine missiles from the god, and due to that he became one of a divine form.

6. Then all the deities said to Indra: "O lord of gods, give a chariot to this Nahuṣa."

7-9a. Knowing the view of the gods, Indra, having called his charioteer, Mātali, ordered him, O twice-born: "O you very wise one, go to him, and carry him—the son of Āyu, ready to fight, in the chariot with the flag;" and he said to Indra: "I shall carry out your order".

9b-11. Speaking thus, he quickly went to Āyu's son, ready to fight. He told the king the words of the king of gods: "O you who know Dharma, 'be victorious in the battle by means of this chariot.' O lord of kings, thus, Indra has told you. Kill in the battle the demon Huṇḍa of a wicked heart."

12-13. Hearing (these words) the lord of kings, with horripilation due to joy (said:) "By the grace of the lord of gods, of the magnanimous Vasiṣṭha I shall kill in the battle the demon of a wicked heart, who deceived gods and especially me."

14-20. When Nahuṣa uttered these great words, the god holding a conch, a disc and a mace himself came there. Drawing out from (his own) disc a great disc resembling the sun's orb, blazing with burning lustre, with round spokes and bringing auspiciousness, the god gave it to Nahuṣa with great joy. Śiva gave him a very sharp lance endowed with lustre. With that excellent lance, he, ready to fight, shone like another lord Śiva,

the killer of Tripura. Brahmā gave him (the missile called) Brahmāstra. Varuṇa (gave him) an excellent noose, resembling the moon's lustre and a conch with an auspicious sound. Indra (gave him) the thunderbolt and (a kind of missile called) Śakti. Vāyu (gave him) a bow with arrows. Vahni (i.e. Fire) gave the magnanimous one, the fire-missile. (Thus) the divine weapons and missiles of various kinds were given by gods to that great-souled king of great glory.

Kuñjala said:

21-25. Then Āyu's son, the hero honoured by gods and greeted by sages knowing the true nature of Brahman with blessings, got into the chariot that was divine, lustrous, decked with gems, making a big sound due to the bells, and full of small bells. With that divine chariot the prince shone like the sun by means of his lustre on the divine path. Blazing like him with his lustre, he rushed quickly and speedily, with that magnanimous charioteer Mātali, towards the heads of the demons, like Vāyu that moves constantly, to the place where that sinful demon stood with his army.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ELEVEN

Nahuṣa Enters Mahodaya, the City of Huṇḍa

Kuñjala said:

1-5. When that brave Nahuṣa, comparable to the lord of gods, was going out to fight (with Huṇḍa), all women out of curiosity and with (i.e. singing) auspicious songs went there. The excellent women of gods, and kinnarīs, (all) eager through curiosity sang melodiously, O best one. Also the gandharva women endowed with beauty and ornaments went there where the king stood, through curiosity. The city of that wicked Huṇḍa was Mahodaya by name; it was everywhere adorned with divine groves (like) Nandana. It looked pleasant with houses having

seven apartments and with pitchers. The best city shone with great staffs with banners. The best city shone with (mansions) shaped like the peaks of Kailāsa, lofty, reaching the sky, divine and endowed with all glory.

6-10a. It was adorned with thickets of trees, groves, divine lakes resembling oceans and full of water and charming with lotuses and red lotuses. It shone with ramparts, great jewels and hundreds of upper stories and with moats full of clear water. It also shone with other great jewels and elephants and horses. It was crowded with good women and men of great brilliance. That (city) Mahodaya shone with many divine grandeurs.

10b-15. Nahuṣa, the great hero and best among kings, saw the city and a divine grove adorned with divine trees in the outskirts. The great hero entered it as a god enters the Nandana grove. The virtuous lord of kings entered the grove on the bank of a river in chariot along with that Mātali. Those divine, beautiful women came there. Gandharvas, the knowers of the essentials of music, extolled the best king with songs. All the (bards like the) sūtas and māgadhas praised the best king, Āyu's son, shining like the sun. Nahuṣa heard the sweet song repeated (i. e. sung) by the kinnaras.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWELVE

Aśokasnudarī has a Glimpse of Nahuṣa

Kuñjala said:

1-4. Hearing that song sung by the celestial women and being affected by the songs and their introductory stanzas, that beautiful daughter of Śiva, pondering, quickly getting up from her seat, and being full of great enthusiasm, possessed of penance and devotion, and seeing the prince who resembled a god, whose lustre was like that of a divine form, whose body was besmeared with divine sandal (-paste), who was adorned with divine garlands, who was graced with divine ornaments and garments, who was bright like the sun, who was having divine marks, (thought:)

5-7. 'Can he be a god, or a very wise gandharva? May he be the son of a nāga (snake) or a vidyādhara? How can he be born among the yakṣas, (when) I do not observe (such a form) even among gods? Even Indra might have been born as this hero (as is seen) from this ease (of him). May he be Śiva or is this Cupid? Or is he Kubera, Pulastya's son, and my father's friend?'

8. When she, the most beautiful and virtuous one was thinking like this, Rambhā, having come there with her great friends, smiled and said to her:

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN

Rambhā Acts as Aśokasundarī's Messenger

Rambhā said:

1. O auspicious one, abandoning the penance, what are you looking at? By pondering over a man your penance would perish.

Aśokasundarī said:

2-5. My mind was completely absorbed in penance. Gods, demons or serpents could not lead me away (from it). (But) O you glorious one, on seeing this one my mind becomes very uneasy. Going to him I desire to dally with him. It has become thus (i.e. so much) eager. O you beautiful one, such a change was (there) in my mind. Therefore, tell me its cause, if you know it well. The magnanimous gods have created me as the wife of Āyu's son. Why is my mind eagar to dally (with this man)?

Rambhā said:

6-11. O you glorious one, O you beautiful one, the ancient soul, Brahmā himself, of the form of knowledge lives in all embodied forms. Though he is bound by the organs of sense functioning to assist him, and full of the nooses of delusion, yet he is always perfect. He, (when bound by sense-organs) does not at all

know the Nature—the portion of the highest and the worldly knowledge: (yet) O beautiful one, this pure righteous soul knows (it). Though you, seeing this very intelligent one, have mental anguish, he abandons sin and runs to truth only. This son of Āyu is your husband. This is the truth. There is no doubt about it. (A lady like you) would entertain doubt by seeing any other man of sinful characteristics. Such is the ordinance, bound by the noose of truth which the gods have made that the son of Āyu will be her (i.e. your) husband.

12-16a. Like this was heard by the soul, O beautiful lady. Knowing the truth of its substance, he remained (there). It does not recognise that your husband has come. Knowing this your chief soul today only runs (after him). The soul knows everything. The soul is the ancient god. This is just that brave Nahuṣa, the lord of heroes. Therefore your heart goes to him; it desires a contact with the truth. Knowing that Āyu's son (will be your husband), it does not at all go to anyone else, O good lady.

16b-19. I have thus told you all that is perpetually in your mind. Killing the very fierce, mean demon Huṇḍa in a battle, he will take you to his own place—Āyu's excellent house. The best hero was kidnapped by the demon; (but) survived because of his religious merit. The best hero was separated from his relatives from his childhood. In the great forest he grew without his mother or father. Now with you only he shall go to his father's house.

20. Having heard these words of Rambhā, the daughter of Śiva full of great joy, said to (Rambhā) born from the ocean:

21-24. "This certainly is my very brave husband of a truthful nature. My mind, very much perturbed due to being full of grief, runs (to him). There is no other god like the mind that knows (things) definitely. O you of a charming smile, I really saw a fine picture—a man of divine characteristics and resembling Cupid. O friend, as my mind runs (after him) on seeing him, it does not run to any other man, O good lady. It does not think highly of any other man. We two shall go to him. Let our friends go home."

25. Knowing her to be eager to go to Nahuṣa, that Rambhā spoke like this and started going.

26a. Then that Rambhā said to her: "O respectable lady, why do you not go (with me)?"

Sūta said:

26b-28a. Reaching well with her friend Rambhā, Nahuṣa with marks of a hero, she sent her dear friend to his vicinity (i.e. to him): "O you illustrious one, go to Nahuṣa of a godly form, and tell him the account, and that I have come for him."

Rambhā said:

28b-29. O you (my) friend of a good vow, I shall do this which is very dear to you.

Saying so Rambhā went to prince Nahuṣa holding a bow and arrows, and as it were another Indra.

30-36a. Rambhā went to him and told him the excellent words of her friend: "O you glorious son of Āyu, I am Rambhā who has come to you. I have been sent by that daughter of Śiva, O hero. For you the lord of gods, the goddess (i.e. Pārvatī), the god have created this excellent and best gem of a woman in the form of your wife, difficult to be obtained in the worlds. This gem is difficult to be obtained by best men, gods along with Indra, devotees, gandharvas, serpents, siddhas and bards of meritorious marks. For you, it has come of its own accord. This gem of a woman is perfect and created with merit, O you very wise one. (It's) name is Aśokasundarī, who remained in penance for (obtaining) you. She practised very severe penance. She always longs for you. Realising this, O illustrious one, honour her who adores you. That beautiful lady does not at all solicit any other man than you."

36b-44. Nahuṣa heard and understood what she said; and replied: "O Rambhā, listen to my words. I know all that you have said before (i.e. to me). Formerly the noble Vasiṣṭha had told me. I know everything—her excellent penance (also). O auspicious one, listen to the reason by which there will be happiness (for both of us). 'Without killing the demon Huṇḍa I shall not go to the excellent lady. I know all this account and also that you are created for me, and that you have practised penance. There is no doubt that destiny has made you my wife. Resolving for (getting) me as your husband, you practised penance. From there the very wicked one took you, following restraints, away. That mean demon separated me, who was a child, from my father and

mother, (kidnapping me) from the lying-in-chamber, O respectable lady. Therefore I shall kill that Huṇḍa, the mean demon. Then I shall take you to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage.' Well-being to you, O Rambhā, tell like this to her who has done what is dear to me."

45-48. Thus dismissed by him, Rambhā again quickly came (back) so Aśokasundarī and told her all his (good words) in brief, O best dvija. That Aśokasundarī, understanding the good words of that great hero Nahuṣa, was full of joy. Then she stayed there with her good friend, Rambhā. (She said:) "I shall ever see what kind of valour my husband has."

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOURTEEN

The Fight between Nahuṣa and Huṇḍa Starts

Kuñjala said :

1-3. Then all the demons, Huṇḍa's attendants, told Huṇḍa, the lord of demons, the good words—the conversation—between Nahuṣa and Rambhā as they had heard them. Having heard them, he got angry and said (these) words to his messenger : "O hero, go and know that man who converses with that daughter of Śiva."

4-8. Hearing the order of his master the demon left quickly. In a solitary place he said these words to Nahuṣa : "You stand round with a chariot along with horses and the charioteer, and with a bow and divine arrows, and you are fearful in an assembly. To whom to you belong ? By whom are you sent, and for what purpose ? Tell clearly to me all that this Rambhā and the other (one i.e.) Śiva's daughter told you today. How is it that you are not afraid of Huṇḍa, the destroyer of gods ? If you desire to live, tell me all this. Leave quickly, do not remain (here). The lord of the demons is difficult to put up with."

Nahuṣa said :

9. Know me to be the son of that powerful lord Āyu, who

is the king of the earth, (and know me) to be the destroyer of all demons, worshipper of gods and brāhmaṇas, and well known by the name Nahuṣa. O demon, in my childhood I was kidnapped by Huṇḍa, your master.

10-14. This daughter of Śiva also was formerly kidnapped by (that) demon. She practised severe penance for the death of Huṇḍa. (Tell Huṇḍa :) "O wicked one, I, who was taken away (when I was) a child from the lying-in chamber, and was handed over to the female attendant and the cook by you, the wicked-minded one, have today come to kill (you) the wicked demon Huṇḍa of sinful acts. I shall also take to Yama's abode other fearful demons." Tell the demon (Huṇḍa) like this : "O most sinful one, know me to be like this."

15-19a. That wicked-minded (messenger) having heard all those words of (i.e. spoken by) the magnanimous Huṇḍa, narrated them to Huṇḍa, after going to him. Having heard them from his mouth (i.e. as told by the messenger), the lord of the demons (i.e. Huṇḍa) got angry. (He thought :) 'Why was he not killed by the wicked cook and the female attendant ? Now he, a disease, that was ignored by me, has augmented. Now I shall kill in a battle this wicked son of Āyu along with this daughter of Śiva with these arrows sharpened on a grindstone.' Thinking like this, he said (these) words to his charioteer : "Make ready the chariot (yoked) with excellent and lucky horses."

19b-21a. Calling the chief of the army he, who was over-anxious, said to him : "Make my army ready; make ready the brave snakes, and horses with the riders, and the soldiers with the umbrellas and chowries. Quickly make ready today my army with (all) its four constituents."

21b-24a. Hearing the words of that Huṇḍa, the swift and very intelligent chief of the army did everything according to the proper procedure. He (i.e. Huṇḍa) surrounded by the complete army went to the battlefield to (fight) with the active hero Nahuṣa, wielding a bow and arrows, (seated) in Indra's chariot, best among the warriors, ready (to fight) on the battlefield, difficult to be obtained by (i.e. unassailable to) gods and demons. Gods of great prowess seated in their aeroplanes in the sky saw him full of bright flames, and as it were another sun.

Sūta said :

24b-30. Then all the demons showered him with excellent arrows. In the battle they fought with the magnanimous Nahuṣa by means of swords, nooses, large lances, (missile called) śakti and battle-axes. They were excited, and roared like clouds on a mountain. Seeing their heroism, the brave son of Āyu stretched his bow resembling Indra's weapon, with the twang of its string. O brāhmaṇas, Nahuṣa also made the sound of his great bow like the bursting (sound) of the thunderbolt. Due to that loud sound the demons trembled. They were dejected in mind and had their spirits broken in the great war.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN

Huṇḍa is Killed in the Battle

Kuñjala said :

1. Then that great soul, holding a bow, ready to fight and shining in the battle, like Death that was angry and desired to destroy the worlds, desired to kill the great demons.

2-3. He killed the demons with a number of mighty weapons resembling the sun's lustre and very bright. As the wind uproots trees, he killed the demons. As the wind shakes the divine mass of clouds, the king destroyed the intoxicated demons with very sharp excellent arrows.

4. All the demons could not (stand) the shower of arrows of (i.e. discharged by) the magnanimous one. Some died, some fled, some escaped from the great war.

Sūta said :

5. Seeing the prince of a great lustre, very intelligent, and destroyer of great demons, the wicked-minded Huṇḍa became angry.

6. Going (near him) he stood thereafter saying these words: "Stop, stop, O son of Āyu, I shall today take you to Yama."

Nahuṣa said :

7. I am standing in the battlefield. See, I have come to kill you. I shall kill you, a wicked-minded demon.

8-9 Speaking thus, he, taking a bow and arrows like the flames of fire, shone in the battle with an umbrella being held (over his head). He said these words to Mātali, the charioteer of Indra: "Today you drive my chariot in front of Huṇḍa."

10-12. Thus addressed by the hero, the quick-footed Mātali drove the horses having the speed of a strong wind. Then the horses jumped as swans would fly in the sky. Reaching the sky with the chariot having a flag and with an umbrella having the moon's colour, the son of Āyu shone in the battle with lustre and valour as the sun shines (in the sky).

13-18a. Huṇḍa too, even when he remained in the chariot, shone with his own lustre, was equipped with all weapons and remained in a hero's vow. O you very wise one, at that time the battle between the two heroes caused amazement to the gods, was fierce and caused fear. At that time Huṇḍa struck the king between his two strong arms with well-whetted, sharp, excellent arrows with heron's feathers attached to them and with darts. When pierced on his large forehead with five arrows he got angry. The king wounded with arrows shone more at that time, like the rising ruddy sun with clusters of rays. With the golden arrows stuck into his body and with his body smeared with blood, the king shone like the sun in the sky in the morning.

18b-20. Seeing his valour, he said (these) words to the demon : "O demon, wait, wait for a moment; (just) see my dexterity." Thus speaking to the demon in the battle, he struck him with ten arrows. He struck him on the face, on the forehead. Due to that the very mighty (demon) fainted and fell down on the chariot, when gods from heaven were seeing.

21-24. Gods and bards and siddhas gave out cry of victory with joy. (They cried :) "Victory, victory, to you, O lord of kings;" (and) they blew conches repeatedly. That tumultuous noise made by the gods entered the cavities of the ears of Huṇḍa who had fainted. Hearing it, he took his bow and an arrow like a snake, and saying, "Wait, wait, I am not dead though you have

struck me in the battle", he endowed with quickness, struck Nahuṣa with twentyone arrows.

25-27. The demon pierced Nahuṣa with one arrow into his fist, with four sharp arrows between his arms; (pierced) his great horses with four sharp arrows, his umbrella with one arrow; (pierced) Mātali with five sharp arrows, the interior of the chariot with seven sharp arrows and the staff of the flag with three sharp arrows. Seeing the wicked one's seizing and aiming and discharging (the arrow) and his quickness, the deities were amazed.

28. Seeing his valour, the king (said to) the best demon : "You are brave, you are learned, you are wise, and are clever in fighting."

29. Speaking thus to the demon, the king, of sharp valour, stretched his bow, and pierced him with ten arrows.

30-33a. With three arrows he cut off the flag and it fell on the ground. With four arrows he knocked down his horses. The king of sharp valour cut off his umbrella; and with ten arrows sent his charioteer to Yama's abode. Having cut off his armour with ten arrows, he split him. He pierced the lord of demons in all his limbs with thirty arrows. With his horses killed, he became chariotless.

33b-38. The archer, with arrows in his hand, and showering (Nahuṣa) with sharp arrows, ran to him. That demon holding a sword and a shield, ran to the king. The king cut off the sword of Huṇḍa, who was (thus) running (to the king). The king cut off his shield with sharp arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads. Then that wicked-minded Huṇḍa, seeing around, took a mallet and he of sharp valour, quickly discharged it. The king then saw it coming with the speed of the thunderbolt, and by his valour he caused to fall down that mallet making a sound, with ten sharp arrows and with sharp horse-shoe-shaped arrows. Seeing the mallet, fallen in ten pieces on the ground, he raised his mace and ran to the king.

39-43. With a sharp-edged sword he cut off his arm, which fell down on the ground, with the mace, armlets and bracelets. Then, making a great sound like the bursting of the thunderbolt, and with his body smeared with blood and running in the great battle, he, full of great anger, desired to destroy the king. He,

the irresistible one, came near the king. The demon, struck on his chest by Nahuṣa with a missile called Śakti, suddenly fell on the ground like a mountain struck with the thunderbolt. When that demon fell on the ground, other demons went (i.e. fled) away. Some entered inaccessible places, some resorted to the other world.

44-45. When the magnanimous Nahuṣa had killed that great sinner, gods, gandharvas, siddhas and cāraṇas became very joyful. When the great demon was killed in the great war, all gods became very joyful; (and) Āyu's son (i.e. Nahuṣa) having obtained her, of a divine form and thriving with penance, became glad.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTEEN

Nahuṣa Marries Aśokasundarī

Kuñjala said :

1-3. That devout Aśokasundarī, auspicious and joyful, reaching, along with Rambhā, the powerful Nahuṣa, said to him : "I am your legal devout wife, as ordained by the gods. O hero, if you desire merit here (i.e. in this world, then please) marry me. Always thinking of you, I remained in penance. O best king, by virtue of my merit I have obtained you."

Nahuṣa said :

4-5a. If you, O good lady, are directed to be my wife, and for that you remained in penance, then after a short time, in accordance with the words of my preceptor, I shall be your husband. O you beautiful lady, we two shall go with this Rambhā.

5b-8. He, of a great glory, putting her and the beautiful Rambhā in his chariot, quickly went with the two in that excellent chariot to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage. He, of a great lustre and full of great joy, saw the brāhmaṇa (Vasiṣṭha) in the hermitage and with her (i.e. Aśokasundarī) saluted him. He narrated everything

to that magnanimous Vasiṣṭha as to how the battle took place on the battlefield and how that mean demon was killed by him.

9-12. Vasiṣṭha too, hearing about the activities of Nahuṣa, was full of great joy, and having congratulated him with blessings, the best sage got them married on an auspicious day when the auspicious moment had arrived in the presence of brāhmaṇas and fire. After congratulating the couple with blessings he sent them (telling Nahuṣa), "O you very intelligent one, go quickly and see your mother and father. Seeing you, let that your mother and your father grow with joy as the ocean grows on a full moon or a new moon day."

13-14. Thus (saying) the sage, the son of Brahmā, sent the hero (to his parents). He, of a quickpace, after saluting that best brāhmaṇa, went with Mātali in that excellent chariot to see his father and mother also.

Sūta said :

15. At that time the deities sent a celestial nymph by name Menikā. Āyu's wife (Indumatī) fell, due to great grief, into the ocean of sorrow.

16-18. To that illustrious queen Indumatī, she (i.e. Menikā) said : "O you fortunate one, give up your sorrow; see your son, with your daughter-in-law, (your son) who has come, endowed with a hero's glory, to the assembly after having killed the sinful demon who had kidnapped your son (i.e. Nahuṣa himself)." Menikā narrated to that Indumatī the good account of what Nahuṣa had done in the battle.

19-20. Having heard the words of Menikā, she, who was full of great joy, said in a faltering voice : "O friend, you are telling the truth. You have said to me what is very dear and like nectar and encouraging to my mind. I should give you my life etc. and even everything that I possess."

21-22. Having thus spoken to her (i.e. Menikā), she said these (words) to the king : "O great king, this excellent celestial nymph tells me that your very brave son has come now." Speaking thus to her husband, she, who was very much delighted, ceased speaking.

23-28. Hearing her words, the lord of kings said to his wife : "O you glorious one, formerly sage Nārada had told me :

'O king, you should never be worried about your son. Your son will come after having very bravely killed that demon.' The words which the sage had uttered formerly have come true. O queen, how will his words be otherwise (i.e. untrue) ? Dattātreya, the best among sages, is actually a god. Formerly, O queen, you and I served him by means of penance. He has given (us) this gem of a son, having Viṣṇu's portion. He shall always kill a great wicked-minded demon. Dattātreya has given me the best and very powerful son who is Viṣṇu's portion, and killer of all demons, and will look after his subjects."

29-31. Speaking thus to queen Indumatī, the king celebrated with great festivity his son's arrival. Being full of great joy he again remembered Viṣṇu, endowed with everything, accompanied by groups of gods, of the form of joy, the only highest object, the remover of pain, giving happiness and the great giver of salvation to good followers of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN

Nahuṣa's Consecration

Kuñjala said:

1-10. Nahuṣa with his wife and Rambhā came in that excellent, divine chariot of Indra to the city called Nāga which was endowed with all beauty, divine auspicious objects, which was adorned with mansions, which possessed golden portals, which was beautified with banners, and with the sounds of many musical instruments, and with panegyrists and bards. It was also adorned with auspicious men resembling gods in form, with women of divine forms and with elephants, horses and chariots. It was full of many auspicious sounds and sounds (of the recitation) of the Vedas, the sounds of music and musical instruments, and of flutes and lutes. He entered the best city full of all (kinds) of beauty. The hero honoured with the auspicious Veda recitation by brāhmaṇas saw his father and very meritorious mother. Being full of great joy, he saluted his

father's feet. That beautiful Aśokasundarī devoutly saluted the feet of both of them again and again. That Rambhā also saluted them and expressed her affection (for them). The prince having saluted his father and having talked to him inquired about the health of his mother and father. With horripilation due to joy the illustrious one (i.e. Āyu) spoke thus :

Āyu said :

11-12. On seeing you, O son, today only all (my) ailments have disappeared; both (my) grief and sorrow have gone (away); the world is delighted with great satisfaction. When you of a great prowess were born, I became blessed. Emancipating your race you have also emancipated me.

Indumatī said :

13-14. O illustrious one, as when the full moon and the new moon (day) arrives, the great ocean, seeing the lustre of the moon increases, similarly I have grown (with joy) on seeing you. I am glorified; I am very glad; I am full of joy. O you, destroyer of the pride (of your enemies), O you very wise one, on seeing you I have become blessed.

15-16. Then that auspicious queen Indumatī, having spoken like this to that son, embraced that excellent son, having smelt him on his head, as a cow smells her calf, and having greeted that son of the form of Nahuṣa, honoured him with blessings.

Sūta said :

17-19. Then that very glorious son narrated to his mother, the auspicious queen Indumatī, the account of his being kidnapped, the birth and acquisition of his wife, his battle with Huṇḍa, and the destruction of Huṇḍa. He himseif told in brief all that account giving delight, to his mother and father.

20-24. The mother and father, having heard about the valour and exertion of their son, were full of great joy and their hearts were full (of delight). Taking his bow and (seated) in Indra's chariot, Nahuṣa conquered the earth spreading over the seven islands along with towns. He presented the earth, full of wealth, to his father. Always giving joy to his father by means

of good acts, he made his father perform sacrifices like Rājasūya. Āyu's son made his parents rich by means of great sacrifices, gifts, vows, restraints and curbs, glory, meritorious and very prosperous sacrifices.

25-30. Then the gods having come to the excellent city called Nāga consecrated the noble Nahuṣa, the destroyer of heroes. The sages possessing great faculties and king Āyu consecrated him on his throne with Śiva's daughter. The very glorious and pious king Āyu, united with his wife, went with his own body to heaven, well honoured by gods and siddhas. Leaving the place of Indra he again went to Brahmā's world. Then well-honoured by sages and gods he went to Śiva's heaven. Due to his own deeds and the great lustre of his son the great king went to Viṣṇu's heaven, and the king lived (there) due to his religious merit. O illustrious one, men should produce such excellent merit by (performing) meritorious acts like this, not by other acts causing grief.

31-33. I have told you all the account of that king, as to how that pious Nahuṣa became the emancipator of his father, the supporter of the entire family, and very learned. O my son Kapiñjala, tell me what other things I shall tell you. The man who listens to such pious, pure account, endowed with glory, of Āyu's son, enjoys pleasures and obtains the place of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEEN

The Story of Kāmoda

Kapiñjala said :

1-6. O father, a beautiful lady was formerly weeping at the mouth of the Ganges. From her eyes tears fell into the great water. They sank into the Ganges and became lotuses. (These) flowers were of a divine nature, great, and fragrant. O father, O illustrious one, why did the pure tears fall from her beautiful eyes into the water of the Ganges ? A bearded man, having but

bones and skin left (on his body) and clothed in a long strip of cloth, collected those fragrant lotuses. Taking those divine (lotuses) of golden colour, he would worship Śiva with them. O you very intelligent one, tell me who that lady is and who that man is. Why does he lament after having worshipped Śiva ? If I am dear to you tell all this to me.

Kuñjala said :

7. O child, listen. I shall tell you the account of happenings relating to gods. (I shall also tell you) the account of the noble Viṣṇu that destroys all sins.

8-9. That Vihuṇḍa, the well-known son of that very mighty Huṇḍa who was killed by Nahuṣa in the battle, practised penance, after hearing that his father (i.e. Huṇḍa) along with his ministers and retinue was killed by the brave and mighty Nahuṣa, Āyu's son.

10-13a. Ready to kill the gods he angrily practised penance. All gods knew the valour of the wicked one which was augmented by means of penance, and knew him to be irresistible in the battle. (They said :) "Vihuṇḍa, the son of Huṇḍa, is out to destroy the three worlds." (Vihuṇḍa thought :) 'I shall wreak revenge for my father and shall kill human beings and gods.' The sinful one, a source of vexation to gods and brāhmaṇas, got ready and started doing harm, and harassed the beings.

13b-15a. Gods scorched by his lustre only and led by Indra, sought the shelter of the noble Viṣṇu, the god of gods; and they said to the god of gods, the lord of the world, and the holder of a conch, a disc and a mace : "Always protect us from the great fear due to Vihuṇḍa."

Śrī Viṣṇu said :

15b-19a. May all deities and great gods prosper with great happiness. I shall destroy the most sinful Vihuṇḍa, the source of vexation to the gods.

Speaking thus to those gods the very glorious Viṣṇu produced illusion and himself remained in the Nandana (grove). He took up an illusory form of a female endowed with merits. Viṣṇu's Māyā is glorious and deludes the entire universe.

Viṣṇu's Māyā took up a matchless form having a good figure and beauty to kill Vihuṇḍa.

Kuñjala said :

19b-24a. To kill the gods he went up the divine path. Then the lord of the demons saw the Illusion in the Nandana grove. The demon deluded by her with his heart rent by Cupid's arrows did not realise that the excellent woman was of the form of Death and his destruction. Seeing her shining like gold and shining with the wealth of beauty, Vihuṇḍa longed for her and he, the sinner, said to that excellent lady: "Who are you ? To whom do you belong? O you beautiful lady, O you who torture my heart, give me company. O you beautiful lady, by your company protect me, protect me. O you chief of deities, O you illustrious one, I shall give you all that, difficult to be obtained by gods and demons, which you ask for."

Māyā (Illusion) said :

24b-27a. O demon, if you have a desire to enjoy me, give me a present. Worship Śiva with seven crores of divine, fragrant flowers grown on Kāmoda, and difficult to be obtained (even) by gods. O noble one, put around my neck the garland made of those flowers. Give me this present. Then I shall be a very dear wife of you.

Vihuṇḍa said :

27b-31a. O respectable lady, I shall do so. I shall give you the present asked for (by you).

Overpowered by love the lord of demons wandered through groves that were auspicious and divine; but he did not find the tree called Kāmoda. He himself went everywhere and asked (people) about the tree. Distinguished people told him that there was no tree called Kāmoda. Thus asking (people) the wicked-souled one being very much tormented by the arrows of Cupid, went to Śukra, and with his neck bent down through devotion asked him (about the tree). (He said) : "Tell me about the charming tree called Kāmoda and full of flowers."

Śukra said:

31b-37a. O demon, there is no tree (called) Kāmoda. (However) there is a lady (named Kāmodā). When delighted by some incident she laughs, then, O demon, from her laughter are produced fragrant, excellent flowers. These divine flowers are of Kāmodā. There is no doubt about it. They are charming yellow flowers and have fragrance. Śiva fulfils the great desire of him who worships Śiva even with one flower (of Kāmodā). O demon, from her weeping also similar large (but) reddish flowers are undoubtedly produced. O demon, they have no fragrance. One should not touch them.

Hearing these words uttered by Śukra, he said : "O you son of Bhṛgu, where is that Kāmodā ?"

Śukra said:

37b-41. In the very auspicious Gaṅgādvāra, the destroyer of great sins, the city named Kāmoda is fashioned by the architect of gods. In that city called Kāmoda, lives a lady graced with divine possessions; she also shines with ornaments, and is well-honoured by all gods. You should go there only, and should worship that excellent celestial nymph. O demon, with some auspicious means, make her laugh.

Speaking thus to the demon, that lord of meditating sages, Śukra, possessing great lustre, ceased (speaking), and became engaged in his own work.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETEEN

The Birth of Kāmodā

Kapiñjala said:

1-4. O father, from her laughter are produced very charming, divinely fragrant flowers, difficult to be obtained (even) by gods and demons; but, O you very intelligent one, why do all

deities long for them? Śiva is pleased when he is well-worshipped with the flowers (produced) from her laughter. Tell me in detail as to what merit the flower possesses. Who would be (i.e. is) that Kāmodā? Whose daughter is that excellent lady? (Tell me how) from her laughter good flowers are produced. Tell me about the merit. Tell me in detail her complete story.

Kuñjala said:

5-16. Formerly gods and great demons formed a great friendship and eager for (obtaining) nectar, they churned the milky ocean. Due to the churning done by the gods and demons four maiden-gems (came out), whom Varuṇa first pointed out and again Soma also. Then the nectar-containing pitcher was pointed out. The ancient group of the four maidens desired the well-being of the gods. The first one was Sulakṣmī by name. The second was Vāruṇī. (The third) was known as Jyeṣṭhā. The other one was called Kāmodā. Among them the excellent and best one was produced first. Therefore, O very intelligent one, she is known as Jyeṣṭhā, and is always worshipped in the world. Vāruṇī is of the form of a drink, and has come up from the foam of water. The one called Kāmodā, has come up from the ripple of the nectar. King Soma (i.e. the Moon) and Lakṣmī similarly sprang from the nectar. Soma became the ornament of the three worlds and dear to Śiva. Similarly Vāruṇī became the remover of death and disease among the gods. Jyeṣṭhā gave great merit to people desiring well-being. The goddess Kāmodā, giver of merit, sprang from the nectar. In the future she will have the form of a tree for the love of Viṣṇu. She will always delight Viṣṇu. She, the auspicious one, will be certainly (known) by the name Tulasī. There is no doubt that the lord of the world (i.e. Viṣṇu) will dally with her. Kṛṣṇa regards the obligations of him who takes (just) one Tulasī-leaf and offers it to Kṛṣṇa, who thinking, 'What should I give him?' becomes dear to him.

17-23. Thus this one named Kāmodā, formerly sprang up from the ocean. When the goddess, speaking in a faltering way due to joy laughs, charming, fragrant flowers fall from her mouth. He who, a diligent one, takes fresh, good flowers and would worship Śiva, Brahmā and Viṣṇu (with them), has gods pleased with him, and they give him whatever he desires. When

she, grieved due to some misery, weaps, tears are produced in her eyes and they fall from them. O glorious one, they are also (turned into) charming, large flowers (but) without fragrance. He who worships Śiva with them, has sorrow and tormentation. There is no doubt about this. There is no doubt that gods give misery to that wicked-minded one who (even) once worships gods with such flowers. I have told you this excellent account of Kāmodā.

24-26. Then Kṛṣṇa thought after seeing the valour and cruelty of Vihuṇḍa, the exertion and violence of the sinner, and sent Nārada (to him telling Nārada): "Delude this irresistible one." Hearing the words of that magnanimous Viṣṇu, Nārada went to that wicked lord of demons, who was going to Kāmodā, and with a smile, said to him:

27-28. "O lord of demons, where are you, (so) eager, now going hurriedly and for what work? For whose work (are you going)? Who has prompted you?" Having saluted Nārada, the son of Brahmā, with the palms of his hands folded, he replied: "O best brāhmaṇa, I have set out for Kāmodā-flowers."

29-36. The pious one (i.e. Nārada) said to him: "What purpose will the flowers serve for you?" He again told the best brāhmaṇa the reason for his act. "In the region of the Nadana-grove, there is an excellent lady. On seeing her I am influenced by (the passion of) love. O best brāhmaṇa, she told me: 'With seven crores of flowers growing in Kāmodā, worship Śiva. Then I shall be your very dear wife. There is no doubt about this.' For that I am today proceeding to the city called Kāmodā. Listen, now I am longing for her, born from the ocean. I shall make her laugh with loud laughters delighting the mind. The illustrious one, being pleased will repeatedly laugh. Her faltering laughter will augment my undertaking, O brāhmaṇa. From that laughter divine flowers will fall (down). With them I shall properly worship (Śiva) the lord of Umā. Śiva, the lord, the controller of all beings and the creator of the world being pleased by that offering of worship will give me (its) fruit."

Nārada said ;

37-43. O demon, you should not go to that best city called Kāmodā. The very intelligent Viṣṇu, the destroyer of all demons

stays there. O demon, I shall tell you about the way by which the flowers called Kāmodā will fall into your hand. There is no doubt that the divine flowers will fall into the water of the Ganges. Being drifted by the divine water (of the Ganges) they will come (to you) immediately. You (please) take those very charming and large (flowers). Taking those flowers you accomplish what is desired by your mind.

That pious Nārada, having (thus) deluded that best demon, again thought to himself : 'Being grieved in what way will she shed tears ?' When Nārada was thinking like this, that moment an idea struck him, and he went to the city of Kāmodā.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTY

Nārada on Dreams

Kuñjala said :

1-4. Then Nārada saw the divine city called Kāmodā, which was crowded with gods and rich objects satisfying all desires. Reaching Kāmodā's house, the best brāhmaṇa (i.e. Nārada) entered it. Then he saw Kāmodā, possessing all desired objects. She honoured the brāhmaṇa with good words like 'Welcome (to you).' The best brāhmaṇa, seated on a divine seat asked her: "Are you living happliy, O good lady, sprung from Viṣṇu's lustre ?" Having greeted her with blessings he (also) asked her about her well-being.

Kāmodā said :

5. By your grace and Viṣṇu's grace, I am living happily. O you highly intelligent one, tell me the reason for which (you made me) answer (your) questions.

6-9. O best sage, a great delusion is produced in my body. It is greatly destroying my body, and is pervading all the worlds. Therefore sleep is generated (in my body) as it well abides in a mortal. O sage, I who was asleep saw a fearful dream. O best brāhmaṇa, someone having come before me said : "The unmani-

fest Viṣṇu will desire contact with the worldly existence. Since then I am occupied with grief, O you very intelligent one. Tell me the reason for that. You are best among those who possess knowledge.

Nārada said:

10. O good lady, dream (of four kinds), viz. gouty, bilious, due to excess of phlegm, and having a complicated derangement of the three bodily humours, is (seen) among human beings. There is no doubt about it.

11-15a. O beautiful lady, neither dream nor sleep exists among gods. The best dream is seen at the time of sunrise. A good (i.e. an auspicious) dream gives human beings the fruit of their religious merit. O you auspicious one, I shall tell you (about) another cause of dream. O you beautiful one, water shakes due to the rockings of great wind. From that mass of water small drops of water are split. O auspicious one, these pure drops of water fall out. They again disappear. Thus they become manifest and unmanifest. O beautiful lady, listen. The occurring of a dream is said to be like that.

15b-19. The (supreme) soul is pure, detached, and is free from love and hatred. After having excelled the objects consisting of the five elements, he remains quite steady. He shines among the twenty-six good elements. The pure soul is alone, eternal and is united with Prakṛti (i.e. the original source of the material world). When due to her modes of the nature of wind he moves from his place, another lustre resembling that of the soul is produced. The auspicious name 'inner soul' is given to it only. O auspicious one, as the drops of water are separate from it, in the same way the lustre of the soul is called the inner soul.

20-26. He is the earth, he is the wind, he is the ether, he is the water, he alone shines. These five great ones are fashioned formerly. They have come up from the lustre of the magnanimous soul, and they become united when they are associated with him. Due to the great fault of the natural temperament they destroy that body, and repeatedly desire another. This is their sport and pastime which is the cause of (their) connection with creation. The ripple of water is produced and disappears. It rises and again it disappears. There is no doubt that their (behaviour) is

like the illustration of the water. O respectable lady, the soul does not perish; fire or wind also does not perish. Earth and ether do not perish, nor does water perish. All the five come up and go away with the soul. O auspicious one, these soul etc. are of eternal nature.

27-43a. It is the body alone that would perish; it is an aggregate of them. He is miserable due to the blemishes of the objects of sense and love and hatred. There is no doubt about it. After the end of the body lives the (individual) soul that is similar to it. As like the spark of fire the soul shines, so the manifest and unmanifest comes to light—(or) is created. The pure soul is the highest Brahman, it is eternally awake; but the inner soul is bound by the great constituents of Prakṛti. When they are well-fed after having eaten food, the inner soul would be happy. Due to great happiness delusion is produced and due to it the mind errs. Then is produced sleep, which is of the nature of darkness (or ignorance) and increasing repose. When the sun would go along the path of Nādī (?) after having crossed Meru, then night would occur till the sun does not shine. The inner soul, when free from the darkness of the objects of sense, shines with the modes of the nature of the elements. The soul is seized by bodies of the former existences and nourished by the five elements. O you highly intelligent one, he goes to a high or a low position. The soul bound by faults is taken to the worldly existence. The individual soul protects the body, the middle one remains behind. The strong (vital air called) udāna throbs, and from that sound is produced. As a dry bellows when filled with air heaves, similary samudāna strongly breathes due to sound. Udāna would be powerful due to the prowess of the soul. The body thus deluded becomes almost dead. Then that very delusive sleep goes (i.e. spreads) over his limbs. It proceeds over the heart, neck, mouth, tip of the nose. Contracting his hands he would remain. The air named Udāna is produced in the circle of the navel due to the prowess of the soul. He is very strong and checks power. There is no doubt that as the holder of a wooden wedge remains when tied with a rope, similarly, the vital air is well-connected with the soul. O you of an auspicious face, the vital air is connected with the inner soul. Having knowledge and reddened the inner soul runs. Recollecting the abodes obtained in the

former existences, he runs there. Remaining there the very wise one enjoys as he likes.

43b-50. Thus the inner soul sees dreams of various kinds. He sees the excellent ones, opposite of them, (all) united with his acts. He sees mountains, great inaccessible places, and high and low places. Know that to be due to wind. I shall now tell you about (the dream) caused by phlegm. He sees water, a river, a lake and places of water. O respectable lady, he sees fire and ample, excellent gold. Know that (dream) to be caused by biliousness. I am telling you what will happen (when a dream is seen). When a dream is seen in the morning, something nice will take place. It is united with one's acts, and shows gain or loss, O beautiful lady. O you of an excellent complexion, I have told you about the period of a dream. That which will happen will happen in Viṣṇu's case also. For that you saw the dreem—you saw that bad dream.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYONE

The End of Vihuṇḍa

Kāmodā said :

1-3. He is said to be soul, whose limit or form (even) all deities do not know, and in which all this is merged; and the expansion of whose illusion is this worldly existence. Listen, O Nārada. For what reason does my lord, the master of the world go to the worldly existence ? A man, who is bound by sinful and even meritorious acts, moves to the worldly existence. O brāhmaṇa, tell (me) why Viṣṇu would go to worldly existence ?

Nārada said :

4. O respectable lady, listen, listen to what the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) did. In front of Bhṛgu he took a pledge : "I shall protect the sacrifice."

5-8. But at the words of Indra, Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu) suddenly left the best sacrifice and went to fight with demons. When the god left the sacrifice and went (to fight with the demons),

then the best wicked-minded demons came and destroyed the entire sacrifice. That Bhṛgu, the best among the meditating saints, cursed him : "Censured by my curse, have ten existences. Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) will take the fruit of his own act." For that reason, O respectable lady, you saw the bad dream.

9-21. Saying so, that brāhmaṇa, Nārada, went to Brahmā's heaven. Due to the great misery of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) she was afflicted at that time. The young lady wept piteously and repeatedly (expressed her grief by) uttering words like 'alas'. O son, listen, she sat on the bank of the Ganges near the water; and due to grief she shed tears from her beautiful eyes. Those tears shed by her fell into the water of the Ganges; and her tears sank just into the water, and they again sprang up in the form of lotuses. Drifted in (the stream of) the water of the Ganges, they flowed. The best demon, deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā, saw them. Though told by the sage (viz. Nārada) he did not realize that they were due to grief. The demon being full of great joy, took them. That lord of demons, deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā, would worship (i.e. worshipped) Girijā's husband (i.e. Śiva) with those seven crores of blooming lotuses. Then the mother of the world got angry, and said (these) words to Śiva : "O you highly intelligent one, see the impious act of this demon. With his mind overpowered by the passion of love, he is taking the lotuses, sprung from grief, and gone to (i.e. found in) the water of the Ganges. With those flowers, sprung from grief and sorrow, and causing distress and tormentation, the wicked-minded one would worship (you). How would great felicity be possible for him ?" "He will succeed in the same manner as he would worship me. He is bereft of truth and meditation. He has set his mind on Kāmodā. He has been (a demon) of a bad behaviour. O goddess. kill him with your lustre." Hearing these words of the noble Śiva, (she said :) "O Śiva, by your order, I shall destroy him only."

22-29. Saying so, the goddess (Pārvatī) remained (there) desiring to kill that Vihuṇḍa. She thought of a means to kill him. Taking up an illusory form of a magnanimous brāhmaṇa, she would worship (i.e. worshipped) lord Śiva with good flowers of Pārijāta. That wicked demon, overpowered by passion of love,

very much afflicted, thinking about her, and his mind set upon her would come (there) and destroy that divine worship. The sinful demon, tormented by Cupid's arrows remembered that great Illusion of Viṣṇu, seen before. Merely by remembering her, he (tormented) by strong Cupid (i.e. feeling of love), and afflicted by the grief due to separation (from her), he wept again and again. Overpowered by Death, the wicked-minded one took those (lotuses) sprung from grief, came there, desiring to worship the great lord (Śiva). Having destroyed the worship offered by goddess (Pārvatī), he would worship (i.e. worshipped Śiva) with (the lotuses) sprung from grief, through great greed. Tears fell continuously from the eyes of the wicked one on the top of the Phallus.

30. The goddess (i.e. Pārvatī) with (i.e. who had taken up) the form of a brāhmaṇa said to him, O you very intelligent one : "Who are you that worship the god with your mind always full of grief.

31. Your tears, impure, due to grief, are falling on the head of the god. Tell me the meaning of this."

Vihuṇḍa said:

32-36a. Formerly I saw a lady, the wealth of all blissful things, endowed with all (good) marks, and a great abode of Cupid. Through attraction for her, being parched by Cupid, I became distressed. She said (to me) : "For union (with you) give me an excellant share (of your wealth). Worship the great lord with flowers springing from Kāmodā and difficult to be obtained. Throw round my neck the garland made of those flowers. Worship the great lord with flowers numbering seven crores." For her I am worshipping the lord who gives the fruit (of one's act) with the flowers of Kāmodā, difficult to be obtained by gods and demons."

Śrīdevī (*i.e. Pārvatī*) spoke :

36b-38a. Where is the devotion, where is the meditation, where is the knowledge of you, the wicked-minded one ? God has absolutely no connection with you. Tell me now as to how the excellent form of Kāmodā is. Where did you get the good flowers sprung from her laughter ?

Vihuṇḍa said :

38b-41a. I do not know devotion or meditation. I have never seen her. I have been everyday collecting them from the water of the Ganges. With those I worship Śiva alone. (This is what) I (have to) say. Magnanimous Śukra also told it to me. On his word I am everyday worshipping the lord of gods. I have now told you all that you asked me about.

Śrīdevī said :

41b-51. O wicked one, every morning you are worshipping the Phallus with flowers sprung from the weeping of Kāmodā due to grief. Obtain the fruit in the same way as you have worshipped the lord of lords with flowers. Having destroyed the divine worship you are worshipping (the lord) with flowers sprung from grief. This very terrible sin has arisen in your case. Therefore I will give you punishment. Enjoy the fruit of your deed!

Hearing her words he, dragged by Death, said to her : "O you wicked one, O you of a bad conduct, O you who are spoiling my undertaking, I shall undoubtedly kill you with this sword only." Speaking thus to the brāhmaṇa, he took the sharp sword and the wicked-minded demon, desiring to kill him, ran to him. That goddess, the spouse of the lord, who was in the form of a brāhmaṇa, got angry. Seeing Vihuṇḍa to have come to her seat, she sent out a 'hum' sound. Due to that 'hum' sound, the mean demon fell down unconscious, like a mountain struck with the thunderbolt by (Indra) taking many forms. When that demon, destroying all people, fell down, people obtained peace, free from all misery and tormentation. For this reason, O child, that beautiful lady, with her mind full of grief, is lamenting on the bank of the Ganges. I have told you all this that you had asked.

Viṣṇu said :

52. O king, speaking thus to his good son, very intelligent Kuñjala, the lord of birds, ceased (speaking). He did not say anything more.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYTWO

Dharmaśarman's Account

Viṣṇu said :

1-5. That righteous and very intelligent bird Kuñjala, having thus spoken to his sons, ceased speaking. He did not say anything to them. The best brāhmaṇa remaining under the bunyan tree said to that great parrot : "Who are you, explaining Dharma while remaining in the form of a bird? Are you a god, or a gandharva, or are you a vidyādhara? Due to whose curse did you obtain this very sinful birth in the form of a parrot? O parrot, due to what do you possess such knowledge which is beyond the reach of senses? Of what great religious merit or penance is it the fruit? O you very intelligent one, why are you staying here in this disguise? Tell me the origin: whether you are a siddha or a god."

Kuñjala said :

6-12. Oh! you have secured divine faculties; I know you, your excellent family and your name. (I know) your learning, and the power of your penance. O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell you everything as to why you are roaming over the earth. O you of a good vow, welcome to you. Sitting on an auspicious seat, resort to the cool shade. The origin of Brahmā is the Unmanifest one. From him Prajāpati was born. He the twice-born was Bhṛgu, endowed with virtues and a brāhmaṇa resembling Brahmā. His (son) was Bhārgava, who knew the essential nature of Dharma. In his family, you, Cyavana, are (born and) are famous in the world. O brāhmaṇa, I am not a god, I am not a gandharva, nor again I am a vidyādhara. O brāhmaṇa, listen to what I am going to say. A best brāhmaṇa was born in the family of Kaśyapa. He knew the sum and substance of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He explained all acts. He was well-known as a vidyādhara and was endowed with a (noble) family and character. O brāhmaṇa, he then shone (i.e. became famous) by his wealth, conduct and penance.

13. Three sons were born to that vidyādhara: Vasuśarman, Nāmaśarman and Dharmaśarman were the three (sons).

14. Of them I am the youngest, Dharmaśarman destitute of virtues. My brother Vasuśarman knew the meaning of the Vedas and sacred treatises.

15. He was well-endowed with conduct (i.e. was endowed with good conduct), and with excellences like learning. Nāmaśarman was very wise and like him (i.e. Vasuśarman) excelled in virtues.

16-17a. O you best one, listen, I alone was born a great fool. O brāhmaṇa, I never learnt the excellent purport of scriptures. Nor did I ever go to the excellent abode of a preceptor.

17b-18. Therefore, my father thought about me like this: 'The name of this son, viz. Dharmaśarman is meaningless. On the earth he is born neither as a learned one nor as a mine of virtues.'

19-24. Thinking like this, the pious one being very much afflicted, said to me : "O son, go to the preceptor's house (and) obtain the import of learning." Having heard these good words of my father, (I said to him :) "O father, I shall not go to the preceptor's house, which is very painful, where there is beating everyday, where there is knotting of the eyebrows etc. and where there is crying (daily); food is not seen there (even) by (doing) work; O best one, (please) listen. There is no sleep by day or at night; and there is no means of pleasure. Therefore, O father, it is full of grief. I shall not go to the preceptor's house. I shall not learn, I am eager to play. O father, by your favour, I shall eat, sleep and play happily and vigilantly day and night with children.

Knowing me to be a fool the pious one, being extremely grieved, said to me :

Vidyādhara said :

25-26. O son, do not act rashly. Exert yourself for (getting) knowledge. By means of learning happiness, glory, matchless fame, knowledge, heaven and salvation are obtained. Therefore, obtain learning (i.e. be learned). Knowledge is a source of unhappiness in the beginning, but later it gives happiness.

27-31. Therefore, O son, acquire knowledge, go to the preceptor's house.

I did not follow the words (of advice) of my father. Everyday I stayed here or there, and squandered money. O brāhmaṇa, people ridiculed and condemned me. I had then a sense of shame destroying life. O brāhmaṇa, I was ready to obtain knowledge. 'Which preceptor should I request ?' With this thought I was anxious and full of grief and sorrow. 'How shall I acquire learning ? How shall I have virtues ? How will heaven be possible for me ? How shall I achieve salvation ?' O brāhmaṇa, thinking like this, I reached old age.

32-39. Some time, I being grieved, sat in a temple. Impelled by my good fortune, a siddha came (there). He was without refuge (i.e. alone); he had overcome his hunger; was always joyful and desireless; O brāhmaṇa, he resorted to solitude; he possessed deep abstract meditation and had controlled his senses. He had been completely absorbed in the highest Brahman, and possessed knowledge, meditation and concentration of mind. O brāhmaṇa, I resorted to him who was of the form of knowledge and very intelligent. With a pure heart, and with devotion, I, having bowed my head, saluted the illustrious one and stood before him. I had become miserable and also luckless. O brāhmaṇa, he asked me : "Why are you suffering ? For what purpose are you experiencing misery like this ?" O best brāhmaṇa, that learned meditating saint thus spoke to me. I, a great fool, told him all my former account; (and asked him). "How can one be omniscient ? For this reason I am very unhappy. You are always my refuge." The illustrious one told me the entire means of knowledge.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYTHREE

Kuñjala's Story: A Preceptor Is a Holy Place

The siddha said:

1-16. Listen, I shall tell you the nature of knowledge. Knowledge has no body, no hands, no feet, and no eyes. It has no nose, no ears. Knowledge does not have the collection of bones. Who

indeed has seen knowledge ? What are its characteristic marks? It is without any form, it is eternal. The omniscient one knows everything. The sun illumines by day; the moon illumines at night; a lamp would illumine (i.e. illumines) the house. These remain in the world. O best one, listen, (I shall tell you) by what lustre is that place seen ? Fools, deluded by Viṣṇu's Māyā do not obtain it. Knowledge remaining in the body is inflamed by concentration and is matchless. That (highest) place will be seen through that (knowledge) and not by means of the moon, the sun etc. Knowledge is without hands and feet. It is eyeless, and is without ears. It moves everywhere. It grasps and sees everything. O best brāhmaṇa, it smells everything; it does hear; there is no doubt about this. There is no lamp like knowledge for the destruction of all darkness (of ignorance). It is seen in the heaven, on the earth, in the nether world—at every place. Those of wicked minds are not conscious of the knowledge that remains in the body. I shall explain to you the place of knowledge, from which knowledge springs up. O brāhmaṇa, it has always been kept in the hearts of beings. He who always desires to burn with the fire of discrimination the great sensual pleasures like sex and great allurements, becoming full of all tranquility, would crush objects of senses. Then would knowledge be born manifesting the full truth. This knowledge has the first principle as its basis; it is spotless and it manifests everything. Therefore have tranquility which enhances all pleasures. Be equanimous towards your enemy and your friend; and always restrict your food and control your senses. You should not form friendship (with anyone); enmity should be cast at a distance. Being without attachment, being desireless, and having resorted to a solitary place, you will possess spiritual knowledge, explaining everything. O child, there is no doubt that by my grace you, remaining at one place, will know the account of what is taking place in the three worlds.

Kuñjala said:

17-19. O brāhmaṇa, that siddha showed me the nature of knowledge. I always remained within his words (i.e. obeyed him). I am pervaded by his existence. By the favour of that good preceptor, I, (even though) seated at one place, know everything

that takes place in the three worlds. I have told you my entire account. O best brāhmaṇa, tell me what else I should tell you.

Cyavana said:

20. How did you, the best among the learned, reach (i.e. get birth in) the species of parrots ? Tell me the reason of it that will dispel all my doubt.

Kuñjala said:

21-27. Sin is produced through contact, and also merit is produced through contact. Therefore an honest person should avoid a worthy (person) or the opposite of him. (Once) a sinful hunter had brought a young one of a parrot after catching it. He was eager to sell it. Seeing it to be beautiful and speaking agreeably and cleverly, a brāhmaṇa took (i.e. purchased) it, and affectionately gave it to me. O best brāhmaṇa, everyday I remained in intellectual meditation. Due to its child-like nature it perched on my hand out of curiosity. O you best brāhmaṇa, I, with my mind always set upon the parrot of the form of (i.e. like) my son, was infatuated by its impatient words. It too used to instruct me : "O father, father, (please) be seated; O glorious one, go for a bath; now worship the god." It would talk to me in such pleasant words. Due to the diversion caused by its words I forgot my excellent knowledge.

28-33. (Once) I went to a forest for (collecting) flowers and enjoying fruits. The bird was taken away by a cat to cause me (i.e. which caused me) grief. I heard from my well-behaved associates living in my company that the bird was killed by a cat and eaten by it only. (Thus) O brāhmaṇa, hearing that the bird talking agreeably was dead I was extremely afflicted with great grief and unhappiness. I was bewildered due to grief on this account and was very much pained. O best brāhmaṇa, I was caught in a great mesh of infatuation. With my mind moved by infatuation I cried: 'O Rāmacandra, O king of parrots, O lord of celebrity', O brāhmaṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, now listen: then I became tormented with grief and separation due to my act.

34-38. I forgot the knowledge made clear to me by the siddha also. I, tormented with grief, remembered that parrot

speaking agreeably. O Bhārgava, crying like: 'O child, O child, who, except you, will now advise me with sentences, with well-formed words. O lord of birds, having pleased me with wonderful stories, and abandoned me in this solitary garden, where have you gone ? Tell me now by which fault I am stained.' Being perplexed I lamented with (i.e. uttering) such piteous words, and was very much tormented with grief.

39-42a. Due to that embarassment and deluded by affection for it I died. O best brāhmaṇa, I was born with that temperament and thought with which I died. I was put in the womb which caused knowledge and remembrance (in me). I remembered the former deed done by me—a sinner and a fool. (I thought:) 'What have I, whose spirit is not disciplined, to do ?' Being in the womb, I thought about it only.

42b-53. Due to that I obtained knowledge which was pure and which manifested everything (to me); and by the grace of that preceptor I got excellent knowledge. O brāhmaṇa, by the clean water of his words the dirt of my body—internal and external — was washed, and it was made pure. I obtained the birth of a bird as a parrot. O brāhmaṇa, when I, thinking of the parrot—thus conceiving thoughts about it (only), died, I was again born on the earth in the form of a parrot. Beings are born with that form, and are intent upon that, have those virtues, that appearance, about which thoughts occur to them at the time of their death. O best brāhmaṇa, O you very intelligent one, there is no doubt that due to the thought at the time of my death I obtained incomparable knowledge here (i.e. in my existence as a parrot). Therefore, I (am able) to see what has taken place and what will happen. There is no doubt that even though I am staying here I know the entire present due to my knowledge. O very wise and very intelligent one. O brāhmaṇa, for the emancipation of human beings moving in the mundane existence there is no holy place cutting the bonds (of karman) like a preceptor. O Bhārgava, listen; I have told you all this. O Brāhmaṇa, I have explained to you all that you had asked. The holy place (in the form) of a preceptor removes all external dirt from a place on the land or in water. The holy place in the form of a preceptor would

destroy sins committed in other (i.e. former) births. This moving holy place (in the form of a preceptor) is excellent.

Viṣṇu said :

54. O best king, that very intelligent parrot, having thus explained the truth to that noble Cyavana, ceased (speaking).

55. I have explained to you this excellent moving holy place (in the form of a preceptor). Well-being to you; ask for a boon that you have in your mind.

Vena said :

56-57a. I do not desire a kingdom; nor do I long for anything (else). O Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), with my body (intact) I desire to reach your body. If you desire to grant a boon I think (you should give me) this boon.

Viṣṇu said :

57b-62. O king, perform a horse sacrifice and Rājasūya sacrifice. O you very intelligent one, make presents of cows, land, gold, water and grains. By making presents a terrible sin like killing a brāhmaṇa perishes. There is no doubt that by making gifts all the four goals of human life are definitely accomplished. Therefore, O king, presents should be made dedicating them to me. I fulfil the intention of the person with which he gives (presents) dedicating them to me. Due to your having seen the sages and having come in contact with them, the heap of your sins has dropped down. There is no doubt that at the end of the sacrifice you will reach my body.

Speaking thus to that Vena Viṣṇu vanished.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYFOUR

Pṛthu's Righteous Rule

Sūta said :

1. When Viṣṇu disappeared, that very intelligent king Vena became anxious as to where the lord of gods had gone.

2-3a. Being full of great joy and having pondered the best king having called the greatest king with sweet words, then said to that magnanimous one with great joy.

3b-6. "O son, you my son have emancipated me from a great sin in the world. O Pṛthu, now you have made bright my dynasty. I ruined it with my faults; you have illumined it with your virtues. I shall perform a horse-sacrifice and shall give many presents. Due to your graciousness I shall today bodily go to Viṣṇu's heaven. O you best and very prosperous king, gather the necessaries (for the sacrifice). O you blessed one, invite brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas."

7. Thus was ordered Pṛthu by the noble Vena. The high-souled (Pṛthu) respectfully said to his father :

8. "O great king, rule over the kingdom; enjoy divine, human and righteous pleasures agreeable to you. Offer a sacrifice to Viṣṇu."

9-14. Speaking thus to his father, intent on knowledge, and saluting him, the lord of the earth (i.e. Pṛthu) carefully took his bow with arrows and ordered all his soldiers : "Proclaim (my order) on the earth: No sin should be committed through the deeds of three kinds. He who, having violated the order of king Vena, will commit a sin, will be killed. There is no doubt about this. Gifts should be given; and O all men, setting your mind on him and being free from jealousy, offer sacrifices to Viṣṇu." O brāhmaṇas, having given such an instruction Vena's son went to a penance-grove for (practising) penance. Giving up all faults and restraining his senses from their objects, he remained without food for a hundred years.

15. Being pleased with his penance, Brahmā said to Pṛthu: "Tell me the reason for which you are practising penance."

Pṛthu said:

16-20. My father Vena is very intelligent and glorious. Let Viṣṇu (himself) cut off the head of that person who in Vena's kingdom commits a sin. Let Hari himself punish him with his invisible disc. Let the heads of those who desire to commit sins mentally, through (physical) deeds or words, be snapped like a ripe fruit from a tree. Let Hari himself punish him with his invisible great disc. Listen, O lord of gods. I desire this boon only from you. If you, O lord of gods, desire to grant a boon, then do that by which my father is not stained by the sins of his subjects. O you four-faced (Brahmā), give (i.e. satisfy this) best desire; my salutation to you.

Brahmā said :

21-26. Let it be so, O glorious one; your father is absolved. He is guided by Viṣṇu and by you, his son, O Pṛthu.

Having thus told (i.e. given a boon to) Pṛthu, the lord left. Pṛthu came back and became (engaged) in royal duties. O best brāhmaṇas, nobody committed a sin in the kingdom of the son of Vena. The head of him who conceives a sin through the deeds of three kinds, is cut off as with disc (by Viṣṇu). Since then nobody committed a sin. Thus was the order of the magnanimous son of Vena. All people always behaved well. Being intent upon all religious duties they lived by giving gifts and food. By the grace of that king they thrived with all pleasures.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYFIVE

The Merit of Listening to or Reciting This Purāṇa

Sūta said :

1-4a. Having well received the order of Vena that very religious prince, Pṛthu, collected all auspicious necessaries (for the sacrifice). Having invited all brāhmaṇas born in various countries, king Vena performed a horse-sacrifice. He gave various

kinds of gifts to brāhmaṇas. The lord of the earth physically went to Viṣṇu's heaven. The religious-minded one eternally lives with Viṣṇu.

4b-12a. I have thus told you the entire account of that king, which terminates all sins and destroys all misery. That religious-minded king Pṛthu ruled the earth. The best king milked the earth with the three worlds. He pleased his subjects with virtuous and religious deeds. I have narrated to you the entire Bhūmikhaṇḍa. The first is the Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa and the second is Bhūmikhaṇḍa. I shall again tell you the greatness of Bhūmikhaṇḍa. The sin of the best man who (just) listens to one verse of this Khaṇḍa everyday, perishes. O best brāhmaṇas, listen to the religious merit of him who, the wise one, listens devoutly to a chapter (of this Khaṇḍa). He gets that fruit which is obtained by a gift of a thousand cows to brāhmaṇas on an auspicious parvan-day; and Viṣṇu is pleased with him. A man who everyday reads this Padma Purāṇa, will not meet with difficulties in the Kali Age.

Vyāsa said :

12b-13a. O you lotus-born one, why is it that very terrible dangers do not come to the meritorious man who listens to the Padma Purāṇa?

Brahmā said :

13b-28. That fruit, O dear one, which is said to be the fruit of a horse-sacrifice, is seen in (the recital of or listening to) the Padma Purāṇa. That auspicious sacrifice, viz. the horse-sacrifice does not at all exist in the Kali Age. That which is (the Padma) Purāṇa is indeed equal to the horse-sacrifice. Sinful men sticking on sinful ways do not enjoy that meritorious fruit of the horse-sacrifice which gives salvation. O best brāhmaṇa, in the Kali Age, men do not enjoy the merit of this meritorious Purāṇa called Padma like the merit of the horse-sacrifice. In the Kali Age sinful men have to go to the ocean of hell. Why will they (then) listen to the meritorious (Purāṇa), accomplishing the four goals (of human life). He, who has listened to this Purāṇa called Padma, has acquired the entire means of the four goals (of human life). Therefore, sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice have disappeared in the Kali Age, O highly intelligent one. They have,

with the Vedas, Vedāṅgas and their notes, gone to heaven. Great faith is produced (even) before in a pious man to listen (to the Padma Purāṇa) who, being endowed with goodness, having faith, and devoted to the lord, desires to listen to it with his sons and wife. No great danger would come to a man who listens (to it). But faithlessness is first produced in the reciter and the listener (who are impious). O best brāhmaṇa, even greed is produced in the listener. Great and terrible delusion caused by god Viṣṇu always ruins the listener. Polluters and revilers and sinners are coming up everyday. O Vyāsa, the good-minded one should realise: 'Oh ! A danger appears to have come up to me', (and) he should perform a sacrifice. With great sacred prayers (in honour) of Viṣṇu and hymns (addressed to) Viṣṇu, which give great merit, with the hymn '*Viṣṇorarāṭa* (from the Viṣṇu-sūkta), with the hymn '*Sahasrasīrṣā* (from the Puruṣasūkta), with the good hymn '*Indam Viṣṇu*', with the hymn '*Ā Brahma*', with the hymn sacred to Śiva—he should thus perform a sacrifice. So also with the Bṛhat Sāman hymn and with the hymn of twelve letters (viz. *Oṃ namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya*). He should perform the sacrifice with the hymn sacred to the particular deity to whom the sacrifice is offered.

29-35a. He should perform the sacrifice with more than eight sesamum seeds, (ladles of) ghee, and sacred wood-sticks of the palāśa (tree). O brāhmaṇa, he should also instal the (representations of) planets and worship them. There (i.e. in the sacrifice) he should worship (Gaṇeśa) the destroyer of calamities, and Śāradā—the chief goddess. He should also worship Jātaveda, Mahāmāyā Caṇḍikā, and the lord of the soil with sesamum seeds, rice and ghee and with the hymns (in honour) of those (deities). He should perform the sacrifice in this way. He should give presents to brāhmaṇas. He should give a gift along with a cow according to his capacity. Then calamities disappear and the Purāṇa would accomplish perfection. I shall tell you about the calamity of (i.e. which befalls) him who does not do like this : A disease giving great pain is produced in his body; grief due to (the death of) his wife or son takes place; so also his wealth is lost; undoubtedly he suffers from many severe diseases. He in whose house there is no wealth (to be given to brāhmaṇas) should observe a fast.

35b-41a. When Ekādaśī arrives properly, he should worship Viṣṇu with a devout mind in the sixteen ways of doing homage to a deity. According to his wealth he should then feed the brāhmaṇas. Then having offered it with a solemn vow and offerings to Viṣṇu, he should take food with relatives, sons and wife. Then he will attain perfection. Those who are devoted to Dharma should listen to the entire text of the Purāṇa. By (doing) that the four goals (of human life) are accomplished, not otherwise. Listen, O brāhmaṇa; in the Kṛta Age sinless men listened to the Purāṇa called Brahma, which consisted of one lakh and twenty-five thousand verses.

41b-49. When the Tretā Age arrived, men listened to the entire Purāṇa called Pādma, the number of verses in which was half a lakh and two thousand. Enjoying the fruit of the four goals, they would again reach Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, in the Dvāpara Age, the text called Padma is said to have twentytwo thousand verses narrated by Brahmā, the highest soul. In the Kali Age, men, devoted to Viṣṇu, will read the text called Padma, consisting of twelve thousand verses only. In all these four texts there is the same import and there is the same sentiment; the remaining (portion) is simply the expansion of the account. The twelve thousand (verses) will disappear, O best one, and, when Kali Age has arrived, the first (text) will again appear. Having listened to the Bhūmikhaṇḍa, a man is free from all sins, is free from all sorrows and gets rid of all diseases. Giving up all other (activities) like the muttering of the names (of a deity), giving gifts, and (studying) sacred texts, a man should carefully listen to (the Purāṇa) called Padma. The first is Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa, the second is Bhūmikhaṇḍa, the third is Svargakhaṇḍa, the fourth Pātāla, the fifth is Uttarakhaṇḍa, destroying all sins.

50. One who devoutly listens to the five Khaṇḍas in the serial order, obtains the fruit of the gift of a thousand cows.

51. O brāhmaṇas, with great luck, the five Khaṇḍas, are obtained (by a man). They are said to give salvation. This is true, (quite) true. There is no doubt about this.

III SVARGAKHAṆḌA

(Section on the Heavens)

CHAPTER ONE

Sūta Romaharṣaṇa Agrees to Narrate Padma Purāṇa

1. Om, salutation to (Gaṇeśa) the remover of obstacles. Salutation to the glorious one. I salute the lotus-like feet of Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu), which are always saluted by Indirā (i.e. Lakṣmī), which are called 'the best', which are fixed in the hearts of people, and which are the only, absolutely excellent abode of the great people.

2-6. Once all the sages resembling blazing fire, all the sages living on the Himālaya mountain and masters of the Vedas, knowing (events) of (all) the three times (viz. past, present and future), magnanimous ones, resorting to (i.e. doing) many meritorious (acts), those who lived on the Mahendra mountain, the Vindhya mountain, in the Arbuda forest, in the Puṣkara forest, on the Śrīśaila mountain, in Kurukṣetra, in Dharmāraṇya, in Daṇḍakāraṇya, Jambumārga, in Satya(-loka)—these and many other spotless sages came along with their disciples, as they were eager to see Śaunaka.

7-8a. The ascetics, having duly worshipped Śaunaka, and being well-honoured by him, sat, in due order, on beautiful seats meant for holy sages and offered by Śaunaka.

8b-12a. They told one another stories about Kṛṣṇa. At the end of (the narration of) the stories by the sages of pure hearts, there came the very bright, very lustrous Sūta, Vyāsa's disciple, named Romaharṣaṇa, and well-versed in the Purāṇas. He duly saluted them ; they also honoured him. The great, glorious sages, the ascetics, like Śaunaka, asked Romaharṣaṇa, Sūta, Vyāsa's disciple, who was properly and comfortably seated:

The sages said :

12b-15. O very intelligent Romaharṣaṇa of a good vow and well-versed in the legends of the past, formerly we have heard

from you stories from the Purāṇas. Now we, who are delighted, are engaged in (narrating) the story of Viṣṇu, since the devotion to Hari is the greatest Dharma of all men. (Please) narrate (to us) again the Purāṇa connected with the account of Viṣṇu. Any other story about Viṣṇu, O Śuta, is said to be like a crematory. That is a sacred text which in itself remains in the form of Viṣṇu's story.

16-18. Tell us the name of holy places giving merit. Wherefrom has this mobile and immobile world sprung? By whom is it looked after? In which (object) is it dissolved? Which places of pilgrimage are meritorious? Which mountains are venerable? Which rivers are very meritorious, auspicious and remover of the sins of men? O distinguished one, tell us all this in the proper order.

Sūta said:

19-21. Well, well, glorious ones, you have asked well, O ascetics. Having saluted that (Vedavyāsa) I shall narrate to you the very meritorious Purāṇa called Padma. I always salute that Vedavyāsa, Parāśara's son, who is the greatest man, who is the only source to be known by all, who is the support of learning, who gives great knowledge, who is to be known by the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, who is always tranquil, who is the object of his own intellect, who is great due to pure lustre, whose glory has spread. My salutation to that revered Vyāsa of unlimited lustre, by whose grace I shall narrate this story about Nārāyaṇa.

22-24. I shall narrate the very meritorious Purāṇa called Padma which contains fiftyfive thousand verses and has six khaṇḍas (i.e. sections). There (i.e. in that Purāṇa) the first one is the Ādikhaṇḍa. Then comes the Bhūmikhaṇḍa. After that is Brahmakhaṇḍa. Then follows the Pātāla Khaṇḍa. The next one is known as Kriyākhaṇḍa, and the last one is Uttarakhaṇḍa. This is the great, wonderful lotus, of which the world is full.

25. It is based on the account of that (lotus); therefore the wise call it 'Padma'. This Purāṇa is spotless and excellent, (describing) the greatness of Viṣṇu.

26-31. (It is the Purāṇa) which, formerly, Viṣṇu, the god of gods, narrated to Brahmā, which Brahmā told to Nārada, and

which Nārada narrated to my preceptor. Vyāsa taught me, very dear to him, all the Purāṇas with (treatises on) history, and collections (of verses). I shall narrate to you that Purāṇa, very difficult to obtain, hearing which a man is free from such sins as killing a brāhmaṇa. He who listens to it gets (the merit of) having bathed at all the holy places. It gives salvation just by listening to it with great faith and devotion. Even if a person listens to it without faith and devotion, he gets a heap of merit. Therefore make all efforts to make the Padma Purāṇa the (honourable) guest of your ears (i.e. make all efforts to listen to Padma Purāṇa). In (i.e. from) it I shall narrate the Ādikhaṇḍa which destroys all sins. The sages, who are here, should, along with their disciples, listen to it.

CHAPTER TWO

The Creation of the Elements, Prakṛti etc.

Sūta said :

1. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall first tell you about the first creation, by which the eternal lord, the highest soul, is known.

2-4. O best brāhmaṇas, in the creations there was nothing (left) after the universal destruction. There was only one lustre called Brahman, the cause of everything. It was the ocean of joy, it was pure, and that which those longing for salvation, desire. It was omniscient because it was of the form of knowledge; it was unlimited, immutable. It was indestructible, always very clear, fixed, great and pervasive.

5-16a. At the time of creation that modification of the form of knowledge merged in itself; it began to create. From it came up Pradhāna (also called Prakṛti). From it sprang Mahān. Mahān is of three kinds: Sāttvika, Rājasa and Tāmasa. As the seed is covered with the skin Mahān is covered with Pradhāna. From the principle of Mahān came up Ahaṁkāra of three kinds : Vaikārika, Taijasa and Bhutādi. As Mahān is covered by Pradhāna, so is Ahaṁkāra covered by Mahān. The Bhūtādi (i.e. Ahaṁkāra)

then produced the subtle element of sound. From that subtle element space having the characteristics of sound was produced. Ahaṁkāra covered the subtle element of sound and (the gross element of) ether. The subtle element of ether similarly produced the subtle element of touch. (Then) very strong Vāyu (air) came up; it is said to be having the characteristics of touch. The subtle element of space covered the subtle element of air. The air, bringing about a change, produced the subtle element of colour. Fire is produced from Vāyu; that is called the quality of colour. The subtle element of Vāyu (air) covered the subtle element of colour. Fire, bringing about a change, produced the subtle element of taste. Therefrom the subtle element of water came up. The subtle element of taste covered the subtle element of colour. The (subtle element of) water, effecting a change, produced the subtle element of smell. From that this earth, with more qualities than possessed by all (other) elements came up. Since it is an aggregate of that, therefore smell is said to be its quality.

16b-19. They are called subtle and primary elements because they remain (in that condition) in the respective (elements). The subtle elements are devoid of specific perceptible characters. The specific characters are later and are in accordance with the order. These (five) subtle elements are derived from the Tāmasa Ahaṁkāra. O superior sages rich in penance, I have told (you) in brief (about the creation). The ten organs of sense are said to be Taijasa (or Rājasa) and Vaikārika (or Sāttvika). The philosophers have enumerated the mind as the eleventh (organ) here (i.e. in addition to the ten). There are five organs of knowledge and five organs of action.

20-30. O you purifies of your families, I shall enumerate them and their functions. (The organs of knowledge are:) hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell. They become joined with intellect for getting perception like sound. (The organs of action are:) anus, sex organ, hands, feet, and mouth is said to be the fifth. Their functions are said to be : excretion, joy (due to sexual act), grasping, movement and speech (respectively). O brāhmaṇas, ether, air, fire, water and earth are united with successive qualities like sound etc. They have various kinds of strength; remaining separate i.e. without combining themselves,

they were unable to create beings. These beginning with Mahat and ending with specific characters, having all come together, being united with one another, resorting to one another, coming together, having the same target, and having complete union due to the direction of Puruṣa and being favoured by Pradhāna, produce the egg. O very wise ones, that egg always grew like a water-bubble from the elements. It, remaining in the water, grew, having risen from Prakṛti, and an excellent place of Viṣṇu in the form of Brahmā. In it the lord Viṣṇu, the master of the universe, and of an unmanifest form, remained after having taken the form of Brahmā. Of it, of the essence of Mahat, those generated by sweat were the egg, the mountains were the outer skin, and the oceans were the fluid in the womb. Oceans with mountains and islands, the group of the worlds with the luminaries, all (this) along with gods, demons and human beings—was (present) in that egg.

31-34. By the desire of Śrī Viṣṇu that golden egg turned into the lotus which rose from the navel of Viṣṇu having neither beginning nor end. The highest Viṣṇu having the Rajas quality, and taking the form of Brahmā, himself proceeds to create the world; and protects what is created as long as the duration of the kalpa (i.e. the day of Brahmā) lasts; he would annihilate it in the form of Narasiṁha or Rudra. The great soul of the form of Brahmā creates, (then) desires to protect the entire world by taking the form of Rāma etc. Then he became (i.e. becomes) Rudra to swallow it.

CHAPTER THREE

Various Mountains and Regions of the Earth

The sages said:

1-2. O best one, tell us fully the names of the rivers, mountains of the countries, and of those who have resorted to (i.e. are living on) the earth, O you who know the measures, the full measure of the earth, and about the forests also.

Sūta said:

3-10. O very wise one, the gross elements in the universe are five in all; and the wise say that they are equal. (They are:) earth, water, and air, fire and ether. All of them are attended with attributes. Earth is the chief of them. The sages knowing the essential nature (of things) have said that the attributes of earth are sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. O brāhmaṇas, four attributes are (found) in water. It does not have smell. Fire (or light) has three attributes: sound, touch and colour. Air has (two attributes, viz.) sound and touch. Ether has (the attribute of) sound only. O brāhmaṇas, in the five elements these five attributes (are found), and (depending) on them the creatures in all the worlds exist. There is homogeneity when they do not overcome one another; but when they, becoming uneven, enter one another, then the beings spring up (into life) with bodies. This is not otherwise. They are destroyed in order. They come into existence in order (i.e. they are destroyed in the same order as they come into existence). All of them are immeasurable. Their form is the lord (himself).

11-17. Wherever the creatures consisting of the five elements are seen running about, men speak about their measures with (the help of their) reason. One should not, however, (seek to) understand matters that are inconceivable by reason. O best sages, (now) I shall describe to you the island of (i.e. called) Sudarśana. O illustrious ones, this island is circular—has the form of a wheel. It is covered with river waters, and with mountains resembling oceans, also with cities of various sizes and delightful countries; it is full of trees endowed with flowers and fruits; is having grains and (other) wealth. It is surrounded on all sides by the salt ocean. As a man would see his own face in a mirror, in the same way the circular Sudarśana island can be seen (in the ocean). Two of its parts (appear) like a pippala tree and two like a large hare. On all its sides it is surrounded by all (kinds of) herbs. Other than this (portion) all else should be known to be water. I shall describe the rest in brief.

The sages said:

18-20a. O intelligent one, you have briefly and duly given

an exposition of it. You know the essential nature of all things. (Now) O Sūta, tell us (about it) in detail. (First) tell us about dimension of the space which looks like a hare. Then you will describe (the land resembling) the pippala (tree).

Thus asked by them Sūta said (these) words :

Sūta said :

20b-24. O very wise ones, these six jewelled mountains stretching (from) east (to west) have gone into the eastern and western oceans. (They are:) Himavat, Hemakūṭa, the best mountain Niṣadha; so also Nīla abounding in lapis lazuli, Śveta resembling the moon; and the mountain named Śṛṅgavat covered with all (kinds of) metals. O brāhmaṇas, these mountains are resorted to by siddhas and cāraṇas. The distance between them measures thousands of yojanas. There are many kingdoms. O best ones, they are called Varṣa. Beings of various species live in them at all places.

25-31a. This is (called) Bhāratavarṣa. Beyond it is Haimavat. The land beyond Hemakūṭa is called Harivarṣa. To the south of Nīla, and to the north of Niṣadha, there is a mountain called Mālyavat stretching from the east. Beyond Mālyavat there is the mountain Gandhamādana. Between the two (i.e. Mālyavat and Gandhamādana) there is the golden mountain Meru globular in shape. It is bright like the (young) morning sun, and like fire without smoke. It is eightyfour thousand yojanas high. O best brāhmaṇas, its depth (also) is eightyfour thousand yojanas. It stands covering the worlds lying above, below and in the horizontal direction. By its side these four islands are situated, O brāhmaṇas: Bhadrāśva, Ketumāla and Jambudvīpa, O best ones; so also Uttarakuru which is resorted to by men who have practised virtuous deeds.

31b-41a. The bird Sumukha, the son of Supārśva, on seeing the big birds of golden colour (on Meru) thought: 'I shall abandon this mountain Meru since the birds there have no difference among them like good, middling and bad ones.' The Sun, the best among the luminaries, constantly goes round it. So also the Moon with the constellations, and Vāyu go round it. O very wise ones, the mountain is endowed with divine flowers, it

is covered with all auspicious golden houses. On that mountain hosts of gods, gandharvas, deities and demons always sport, accompanied by the bevies of celestial nymphs. Brahmā, Śiva and Śakra, the lord of gods gather there, and perform various sacrifices with munificent gifts. (The gandharva) Tumbura, Nārada, (and the two gandharva brothers) Hāhā and Hūhū, having gone there, praise with various hymns the best (of the gods). Well-being to you; the seven high-souled sages and Kaśyapa, the lord of created beings always go there on a parvan-day (i.e. the full-moon day or the new-moon day). On the summit of that mountain only Uśanas or Kavi (i.e. Śukra) is honoured by the demons. It has jewels with gold; so also other jewelled mountains are (parts) of Meru. The lord Kubera gets the fourth part of it. Of that wealth he gives the sixteenth part to human beings.

41b-45a. Adjacent to this mountain is the Karṇikāra grove, which is divine, which is full of flowers of all seasons, which is charming and is elevated with a mass of rocks. There the revered lord Śiva himself, the cause of beings, surrounded by divine beings and accompanied by Umā, and wearing a garland of Karṇikāra flowers reaching his feet, and shining with his three eyes resembling three risen suns, sports. Truthful siddhas, practising severe penance and of good vows (alone can) see him. The great god cannot be seen by those of a wicked conduct.

45b-48. From the peak of the mountain, O best brāhmaṇas, flows, like a stream of milk, the pious, auspicious Ganges, also called Bhāgīrathī, of a universal form, immeasurable, flowing out with a fearful noise, resorted to by the most pious beings, (and falls) with a great speed into the charming lake of Candramas. She has produced that auspicious lake resembling an ocean. The bearer of Pināka (i.e. Śiva) held on his head for a hundred thousand years that Ganges which was incapable of being borne even by the mountains.

49-54. O best brāhmaṇas, Ketumāla is on the western side of Meru; (and) O brāhmaṇas, the country called Jambukhaṇḍa is there only. O best ones, there the span of human life is ten thousand years. The men are of golden complexion and the women resemble celestial nymphs. Human beings there are healthy, free from sorrow and always of cheerful minds. Men born there are of the brightness of heated gold. Kubera, the lord

of guhyakas, surrounded by groups of the celestial nymphs, rejoices with the demons on the peaks of Gandhamādana. By the side of Gandhamādana (there live) other (people) with their sin destroyed. They have a long span of life of eleven thousand years. O brāhmaṇas, the men there are dark in complexion, lustrous and very strong. All the women have the complexion of lotus and are very beautiful.

55-67a. Śveta has blue lotuses; beyond Śveta is the excellent country called Hairaṇyaka. (Beyond that) is Airāvata having several countries, O brāhmaṇas. O glorious ones, there are two countries, of the form of a bow on the south and the north. Ilāvṛtta is in the middle. (Thus) there are five divisions. Of these the succeeding country excels (preceding ones) in attributes like span of life, health, righteousness, desirable objects and material things. (In spite of differences) O best ones, beings in all these countries live together (amicably). O glorious ones, this earth is covered with mountains. The great Hemakūṭa is (also) the mountain called Kailāsa. There god Vaiśravaṇa (i.e. Kubera) rejoices with guhyakas. To the north of Kailāsa and near the Maināka mountain there is the very great, divine mountain called Maṇimaya having golden peaks. By its side there is a large, divine, bright, charming lake called Viṣṇusaras, with golden sands (on its banks), where Bhagīratha, having seen Gaṅgā, (also called) Bhāgīrathī, lived for many years. There are sacrificial pillars decked with gems, and lands full of gold. The very glorious thousand-eyed (god, i.e. Indra) performed sacrifices there, and attained perfection. The eternal creator, of a bright lustre, and the lord of beings, is worshipped there by (beings in) all the worlds. There (reside) Nara, Nārayaṇa, Brahmā, Manu and Sthāṇu (i.e. Śiva) as the fifth. The celestial (Gaṅgā) taking three paths, first appeared there after moving from Brahmā's heaven, and flowed in seven streams : Vaṭodakā, Sarasvatī, Pārvatī, Jambūnadī, Sītā, Gaṅgā and Sindhu as the seventh. She is inconceivable, has a divine appellation, and is endowed with prowess.

67b-71a. There, at the end of the yuga (i.e. at the time of creation), a thousand sacrifices are performed (by gods and sages). Sarasvatī (in her course) appears at places and disappears at (other) places. These seven (streams of) Gaṅgā are well-known

in the three worlds. Demons live on Himavat and guhyakas on Hemakūṭa. Serpents and snakes reside in Niṣadha; and Gokarṇa is a penance-grove. The mountain Śveta is said to be (the abode) of gods and demons. Gandharvas always live on Niṣadha, and the brāhmaṇic sages on Nīla. O glorious ones, Śṛṅgavān is (said to be) a place where gods move.

71b-75. O illustrious ones, these are the seven countries according to the division (of the world). Mobile and immobile creatures have encamped here. Prosperity of various kinds—both providential and human—of these (creatures) is seen (there). It cannot be enumerated. The graceful ones are to be believed. O brāhmaṇas, (I have told you) about the divine form of the hare about which you had asked me. I have also told you about the two countries lying adjacent to the country (having the form like that) of a hare in the south and in the north. They are (the hare's) ears. They are Karṇadvīpa and Kāśyapadvīpa. O Brāhmaṇas, the beautiful Malaya mountain has rocks of (as in) Karṇadvīpa. This other country looks like the hare's form.

CHAPTER FOUR

Uttarakuru, Bhadrāśva, Mālyuvat

The sages said:

1. O Sūta, O you very intelligent one, tell us in full (about the countries) to the north, west and east of Meru, so also about the Mālyavat mountain.

Sūta said:

2. O brāhmaṇas, on the south of Nīla, and the northern side of Meru there is the auspicious land called Uttarakuru, where siddhas have resided.

3. The trees there have sweet fruits and always have flowers and fruits. The flowers are very fragrant and the fruits are tasty.

4-5. O best brāhmaṇas, some trees there give all the fruits as desired by (one who approaches them). O best brāhmaṇas, there are other trees called kṣīrin (i.e. yielding milk). All they always ooze milk that resembles nectar. They also yield clothes and in their fruits are ornaments.

6. The entire land is full of gems and has fine golden sands, O you ascetics, and there are trees bearing no fruit (but) pleasant to touch in all seasons.

7. Men that are born there have dropped from the world of gods. They are born in pure, noble families, and are very handsome.

8-11. There twins (of opposite sexes) are born and women resemble the celestial nymphs (in beauty). They (i.e. the men and women) drink the nectar-like milk of those milk-yielding trees. The twins that are born there grow equally during the (proper) period. Both have similar beauty, virtues and dresses also. They are fit for one another like the cakravāka birds, O brāhmaṇas. Those people are healthy and always of a cheerful mind. O glorious one, they live for ten thousand and ten hundred years, and do not desert each other.

12. Birds called Bhāruḍa, having sharp beaks and great strength, carry them away when dead and throw them into valleys.

13. O brāhmaṇas, I have described to you in brief (the country called) Uttarakuru. I shall now duly describe to you the eastern side of Meru.

14. O ascetics, in the country called Bhadrāśva which is the chief (country), there is a grove (called) Bhadraśāla, where there are huge trees called kālāmra.

15-18. O glorious ones, the kālāmra trees always bear flowers and fruits and are auspicious. They are a yojana tall and are resorted to by siddhas and cāraṇas. The men there are white (in complexion), bright and very strong. The women have the complexion of lotuses, are beautiful and pleasant to look at. They have complexion like that of the moon, have four (principal) colours and their faces are like the full moon. Their bodies are cool like the moon and they areskilled in dancing and singing. O best brāhmaṇas, the span of life there is ten thousand years. They who drink the juice of kālāmra, always remain young.

19-21a. On the south of Nīla, on the north of Niṣadha there is a huge, ancient, Jambu tree. It is auspicious, and grants all desired objects. It is resorted to by siddhas and cāraṇas. The ancient country Jambudvīpa is so called after its name. (The height of the jambu tree) is a thousand and a hundred yojanas, O best brāhmaṇas.

21b-26. Similarly on the eastern peak of Mālyavat there are small mountains. O brāhmaṇas, Mālyavat measures fifty thousand yojanas. Men born there resemble gold (in their complexion). All of them have fallen from Brahmā's heaven and all expound the Vedas. They practise divine penance and live in perpetual celibacy. They enter the sun for protecting the beings. Sixty thousand and sixty hundred of them surround the sun, and go before Aruṇa. Being heated with the sun's heat for sixty thousand years they (ultimately) enter the moon's orb.

CHAPTER FIVE

Ramaṇaka, Hiraṇmaya, Airāvata

The sages said:

1. O best one, tell us duly the names of countries and mountains, so also (about) those that live on those mountains.

Sūta said:

2-4. On the south of Śveta and on the north of Niṣadha there is the country named Ramaṇaka. The men there are born in pure noble families, and all of them are handsome; and all the men that are born there are without enemies. O glorious ones, they being always cheerful, live for eleven thousand and five hundred years.

5-6a. On the south of Nīla and on the north of Niṣadha there is a country called Hiraṇmaya, where there is the river Hairaṇvatī, where, O very wise ones, lives this best bird, the king of birds (i.e. Garuḍa).

6b-8a. The brāhmaṇas there follow (i.e. perform) sacrifices, and the archers are handsome. O brāhmaṇas, the men there are very strong and always have cheerful hearts. O you great ascetics, they live for a span of twelve thousand and five hundred years.

8b-11a. O best brāhmaṇas, the mountain has only three sacred summits. One of them is full of jewels; (another) one, golden and wonderful; (still another) one is full of all gems and looks beautiful with mansions. There the respectable self-luminous lady Śaṇḍinī always lives. O best brāhmaṇas, beyond the Śṛṅgavat mountain, and on its north and near the ocean is the country called Airāvata.

11b-14a. The sun has no scope there; men do not decay. (Only) the moon with the stars covers it like a light. The men there are born with the splendour of lotuses, with the complexion of lotuses and with eyes resembling lotus-petals, and with the fragrance of lotuses. They are unfallen, of agreeable fragrance (possessed by their bodies); they do not eat food and have their senses controlled. O brāhmaṇas, all of them have fallen from the world of gods, and are without any blemish.

14b-15a. O best brāhmaṇas, those most religious men live a span of life of thirteen thousand years.

15b-19. So also to the north of the milky ocean lives the lord, Vaikuṇṭha, Viṣṇu, in a golden car. The car has eight wheels, has (celestial) beings on it and has the speed of mind. It has a colour like fire, is very effulgent, and is decorated with gold. O best brāhmaṇas, he is the lord of all creatures. He is the withdrawl and the expansion, so also he fashions and gets fashioned (i.e. he is the cause of the destruction and creation of) the earth, water, ether, air and fire. He is the sacrifice for all creatures and fire is his mouth.

CHAPTER SIX

Bhāratavarṣa : Its Rivers and Regions

The sages said:

1. Tell us about the auspicious Bhārata country which endows merit, (since) you are intelligent in our opinion.

Sūta said:

2-6. I shall now describe to you the excellent country Bhārata of the god dear to his friends, of Manu the son of Vivasvān, of Pṛthu, of the wise Vainya; also of the high-souled Ikṣvāku, of Yayāti, Ambarīṣa, Māndhātṛ and Nahuṣa; also of Mucakunda, Kuberośīnara, Ṛṣabha; also of Aila, and king Nṛga; of Kuśika, of the royal sage Gādhi the magnanimous one, also of Soma, and of the royal sage Dilīpa; also, O glorious ones, of other powerful kṣatriyas and is dear to all beings.

7-8a. Now I shall describe the country as I learnt about it, O brāhmaṇas. These seven are principal mountains; Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Śuktimān, and also Ṛkṣavān; so also Vindhya and Pāriyātra.

8b-9a. O brāhmaṇas, there are thousands of (other) mountains near them. They are not (so well)-known, (but) possess excellences and have many variegated peaks.

9b-27a. Other smaller mountains are known (to exsit) and they are inhabited by low tribes. Aryans and Mlecchas and many men of mixed (blood) drink (the water of) the pure rivers Gaṅgā, Sindhu, Sarasvatī; also (of) Godāvarī, Narmadā having profuse water, (of) the great river Śatadru, Candrabhāgā, (of) the great river Yamunā, (of) Dṛṣadvatī, Vitastā, and Vipāpā of pure sands; also (of) the river Vetravatī, Kṛṣṇaveṇī, (of) Irāvatī, Vitastā, Payoṣṇī and Devikā; also (of) Vedasmṛti, Vedasīrā, Tridivā, Sindhulākṛmi, Karīṣiṇī, Citravahā, and (of) the river Trisenā, also Gomatī, Dhūtapāpā, and (of) the great river Candanā, Kauśikī, the charming Tridivā, Nācitā, Rohitāraṇī, Rahasyā, Śatakumbhā, and Śarayū also, O best of brāhmaṇas; similarly (of) Carmaṇvatī, Vetravatī, Hastisomā, Diś; Śarāvatī, Payoṣṇī, Bhīmā; also Bhīmarathī, Kāverī, Culukā, and Ahitāpī, and also Śatamalā; and Nīvārā, Mahitā, also (of)

the river Suprayogā, Pavitrā, Kṛṣṇalā, Sindhu, Vājinī and Puramālinī, Pūrvābhirāmā, Vīrā and Bhīmā, also Mālāvatī, Palāśinī, Pāpaharā, Mahendrā, Paṭalāvatī, Kariṣiṇī, Masiknī, and (of) the great river Kuśacīrī, Marutā, Pravarā, Menā, Hemā; also Ghṛtavatī, Anāvatī, Anuṣṇā, and Savyā, O best brāhmaṇas; and Sadāvirā, Adhṛṣyā, and (of) the great river Kuśacīrā, Rathacitrā, Jyotirathā, Viśvāmitrā and Kapiñjalā, Candrāvahaphalī, and (of) the river Kucīrā, Vainadī, Piṅgalā, and (of) the great river Tuṅgavegā, Vidiśā, Kṛṣnaveṇā, and Tāmrā and Kapilā also; Dhenu, Sakāmā, Vedasvā, Havisrāvā, and Mahāpathā; also (of) Śiprā, Picchalā, and the river Bhāradvājī, Kaurṇikī, the river Śoṇā, Bāhudā and Candramā; Durgā, Antaḥśilā, and Brahmamedhyā and Dṛṣadvatī, Parokṣā and Rohī; also Jambūnadī; Sunāsā, Tamasā, Dāsī, Sāmānyā, Varaṇā, Asī, Nīlā, and Dhṛtikarī, and the great river Parṇāśā, Mānavī, Vṛṣabhā, Bhāsā, Brahmamedhya, Dṛṣadvatī.

27b-30. These and others are the many great rivers, O best brāhmaṇas. (Aryans and Mlecchas drink the water of) the always pure Kṛṣṇā, Mandagā, Mandavāhinī, Brāhmaṇī, Mahāgaurī, and Durgā also, O best ones; (and of) Citrotpalā, Citrarathā, Atulā and Rohiṇī; Mandākinī, Vaitaraṇī, and the great river Kokā, Śuktimatī, Anaṅgā, also Vṛṣasāhvayā; Lohityā, Karatoyā, also Vṛṣakātvayā; Kumārī and Ṛṣitulyā, and Mārīṣā and Sarasvatī; Mandākinī, Supuṇyā, and Sarvā, Gaṅgā, O best ones.

31-33a. All these are the mothers of the (whole) world. Like these there are hundreds and thousands of renowned rivers. O brāhmaṇas, I have thus described (to you) the rivers as I remembered them.

33b-65. Hereafter listen to the description of the countries when I am giving it. Among them are Kurupāñcāla, Śalva, Mādreya, Jāṅgala, Śūrasena, Pulinda, Baudha, and Māla also; Matsya, Kuśila, Saugandhya, Kutsapa, Kāśi-kośala; Cedi, Matsya, Karuṣa, Bhoja, Sindhu and Pulindaka, and Uttama, Daśārṇa, Mekala with Utkala, Pañcāla, Kośala, Nikapṛṣṭha, Yugandhara, Bodha, Madra, Kaliṅga, Kāśā, Parakāśa, Jaṭhara and Kukura, also Daśārṇa, O extremely good ones; Kunti, Avanti, also Aparakunti, Gomanta, Mallaka, Puṇḍra, Vidarbha and Nṛpavāhika; the (South) and North Aśmaka, and the

smaller Goparāṣṭra, Adhirājya, Kuśaṭṭa, Mallarāṣṭra and Kerala ; Mālava, Upavāsya, Cakra, Vakra, Ālaya and Śaka; Videha, Magadha, Sadma, Malaja and also Vijaya; Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga and in the same way Yakṛllomāna; Malla, Sudeṣṇā, Prahlāda, Mahiṣa and also Śaśaka; Bālhika, Vāṭadhāna, Ābhīra, Kālatoyaka, Aparānta, Parānta and Paṅkala and Carmacaṇḍika, Aṭavīśekhara, and Merubhūta, O best ones; Upāvṛta, Anupāvṛta, Suraṣṭra and also Kekaya; Kuṭṭa, Aparānta, Māheya, Kakṣa, Samudra, Niṣkuṭa; O brāhmaṇas, Andha and the many hilly tribes, also the tribes residing in the mountains, Aṅga, Malada, Magadha, Mālava, Arghaṭa, Sattvatara, Prāvṛṣeya, and Bhārgava, O best brāhmaṇas; Puṇḍra, Bhārga, Kirāta and Sudeṣṇa and Bhāsura; Śaka, Niṣāda, Niṣadha, also Anārta and Nairṭa; Pūrṇala, Pūtimatsya, Kuntala and also Kuśaka ; Tarigraha, Śūrasena, Ījika, Kalpa and Kāraṇa ; Tilabhāga, Masāra, Madhumatta, Kakundaka, Kāśmīra, Sindhu, Sauvīra, Gāndhāra, and Darśaka ; Abhisāra, Kudruta, Saurila and Bālhīka, Darvī and Mālava, Darva, Vātaja and Amarathoraga; also, O brāhmaṇas, Balaraṭṭa, Sudāman, Sumallika, Bandha, Karīṣa and also Kulinda and Gandhika, Vanayu, Daśa, Pārśvaroman, Kuśabindu; Kāccha, Gopālakaccha, Jāṅgala, Kuruvarṇaka; Kirāta, Barbara, Siddha, Vaideha, Tāmraliptika, Auḍra, Mleccha with Sairindra, Pārvatīya (mountaineers), O best ones. O best sages, and other countries are on the south : Draviḍa, Kerala, Prācya, Mūṣika and Bālamūṣika; Karṇāṭaka, Māhiṣaka, Vikandha and Mūṣika also; Jhallika, Kuntala, also Sauhṛda, Anala and Kānana; also Kaukkuṭaka, Bola, Kokaṇa, Maṇivālaka; Samaṅga, Kanaka and Kuṅkura, Aṅgāra and Māriṣa; Dhvajinyutsavasaṁketa, Trivarga and Mālyaseni; Vyūḍhaka, Koraka, Proṣṭa, Saṅgavegadhara also; also Vindhya, Rulika, Pulinda with Balvala; Mālava, Malara also, and also Aparavartaka; Kulinda, Kālada, also Candaka and Kuraṭa; Muśala, Tanavāla, Satīrtha, Pūtisṛñjaya; Anidāya, Śivāṭa, and also Tapana and Sūtapa; and Ṛṣika and Vidarbha, Taṅgana and Aparataṅgaka; O best sages, the others at the north are Mlecchas; the Yavanas with Kāmbojas are terrible Mleccha tribes; Śakṛghṛhas, Kulaṭyas Hūṇas with Pārasikas, also Ramaṇas and others (like) Daśamālikas are other tribes. There are kṣatriya colonies and also the

families of vaiśyas and śūdras. (There are the tribes called) Śūra, Ābhīra, Darada, Kāśmīra with Paśu; also Khāṇḍīka, Tuṣāra, Padmaga, Girigahvara, Ādreya with Bharadvāja, also Stanapoṣaka; Droṣaka, Kaliṅga, and Kirāta tribes, (those) killing with javelins and Karabhañjaka. These and others are the countries which are on the eastern and northern sides; O brāhmaṇas, I described them by way of an illustration; so (I explained) the great fruit, according to their virtue and power, the three goals (of human life).

CHAPTER SEVEN

Span of Life in the Four Yugas

The sages said:

1-2. Tell us, in detail, of the measure (i.e. span) of life, strength, the auspicious and inauspicious, the future, past and present (of the residents) of Bhāratavarṣa, Himavat, and also Harivarṣa.

Sūta said:

3-8. There are four yugas in Bhāratavarṣa. The first yuga was Kṛta; then there was Tretāyuga, O brāhmaṇas. After that Dvāpara sets in; then comes Kali. The span of life, O best sages, was known to be four thousand years, in Kṛtayuga. O ascetics, similarly they know that the span of life in Tretāyuga is three thousand years. The span of life at present in Dvāpara is two thousand years; for that much period men live on the earth. However, in Tiṣya (i.e. Kali)-yuga, men die while in womb, and also they die as soon as they are born.

9-11. In Kṛtayuga, O brāhmaṇas, very strong, very powerful men, having the attribute of wisdom were born and begotten in hundreds and thousands. O brāhmaṇas, strong and handsome brāhmaṇas were born and begotten in Kṛtayuga. Ascetics with penance as their treasure were born and begotten endowed with great perseverence, high souls, pious and truthful

in speech. The kṣatriyas also are born handsome, able-bodied, of great valour, skilled in archery and brave in battles, and esteemed by the brave. In Tretāyuga, all the kṣatriyas were emperors.

12-15. In Dvāparayuga, however, all the castes were always born with great energy, power and desire to kill one another. Men born in Kaliyuga will possess little lustre, are said to be wrathful, greedy, untruthful. Human beings in Kaliyuga will have jealousy, pride, and also anger, deceit and malice, O brāhmaṇas; in the middle yuga, Dvāpara, a small portion remains. In qualities, Himavat is superior (to Bhāratavarṣa) and Harivarṣa is superior to that.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Śākadvīpa: Mountains, Rivers and Countries

The sages said:

1-3a. O best one, you have duly described (to us) Jambukhaṇḍa. Tell us correctly the extent of its dimensions. You who see the whole, tell us properly about the extent of the ocean, as well as about Śākadvīpa and the sacred Kuśadvīpa: also tell us properly about Śālmala and about Krauñca-dvīpa.

Sūta said:

3b-6. O brāhmaṇas, there are many islands which have covered the earth. I shall describe the seven islands: Listen, O best brāhmaṇas. The measure of the mountain Jambu is full eighteen thousand and six hundred yojanas. The extent of the salt sea is said to be double this. It is crowded with many countries, and is beautified with gems and corals. It is also adorned with mountains variegated with many minerals. Crowded with siddhas and cāraṇas, the ocean is circular in form.

7-10. O best ones, I shall now duly describe Śākadvīpa. O pious ones, today listen properly when I am describing it. O

best brāhmaṇas, it is twice the size of Jambudvīpa. O glorious ones, best sages, the milky ocean too which surrounds it is like that with its divisions. The communities there are righteous, and the men there never die. Then whence can there be dearth? The men there are endowed with the lustre of forgiveness. O best sages, I have duly told you this brief description of Śākadvīpa. O glorious ones, what else should I tell you?

The sages said:

11. O you righteous one, you have duly given us a brief description of Śākadvīpa. O very intelligent one, now describe it correctly and in detail.

Sūta said :

12-13a. Like that here also, O brāhmaṇas, there are seven mountains. They are jewelled mountains. Also there are oceans, rivers. I shall (now) tell their names; O righteous ones, you are asking about a very useful thing.

13b-18. The first mountain having gods, sages and gandharvas (as its residents) is called Meru. O glorious ones, (the other) mountain stretching towards the east is Malaya. From it clouds proceed in all directions and there they are generated. O sages, beyond it the large mountain is Jaladhāra. From it Indra always takes excellent water. O best brāhmaṇas, from that rain is produced in the rainy season. (Then there is) the high mountain Raivataka, where (i.e. over which) the constellation Revatī is eternally fixed in the firmament. The grandsire himself has made this arrangement. O best brāhmaṇas, on the north is the great mountain called Śyāma. It has the brightness of new clouds; it is high; is rich and has a bright body; due to it the people there are dark (yet) cheerful.

The sages said:

19. O Sūta, a great doubt has come to us (i. e. arisen in our mind): How have they entirely become dark?

Sūta said:

20-39. O very wise, best sages, in all the islands (men of) dark and fair complexion may be found; but since dark comp-

lexion (among people) prevailed, it is called Śyāma (i. e. dark) mountain. O best sages, next to this there is a large mountain Durgaśaila. Then there is the mountain Keśarin, from which breezes (fragrant) with saffron blow. The measure of (each of) them is twice (that of the one mentioned before). O best brāhmaṇas, the wise have said that there are seven countries in them (i.e. in the island). That of the great Meru is Mahākāśa; that of the giver of water (i.e. Malaya) is Kumudottara; O very wise ones, the country of Jaladhāra is known as Sukumāra; (the country) of Raivataka is (called) Kaumāra; and of Śyāma is (called) Maṇikāñcana. O best brāhmaṇas, in the centre of the island there is a great tree called Śāka having height and breadth which can be measured with that in the Jambudvīpa. Beings always go to it. The countries in it are holy, and Śiva is worshipped there. Siddhas, cāraṇas and deities go there. All the subjects there are pious; and the four castes, free from jealousy are engaged in their own duties. A thief is never seen there. The people there, O very wise ones, have a long life and, being free from old age and death, grow like rivers during the rainy season. The rivers there have holy water and the Ganges flows there in many streams. O brāhmaṇas, they are Sukumārī, Kumārī, Sītā, and Śitodakā, also Mahānadī, similarly the river Maṇijalā, and the river called Ikṣuvardhanikā, O best sages. From there proceed rivers having holy water and very beautiful, in hundreds of thousands, from where Indra showers. It is not possible (for me) to remember and recount their names. (All) these excellent rivers are holy. Then there are four holy countries well-known in the world: Mṛga, Maśaka Mānasa and Mallaka. Mṛga is mostly populated with brāhmaṇas who are engaged in their duties. In Maśaka live kṣatriyas who are pious and grant the desires (of supplicants). O glorious ones, in Mānasa live vaiśyas acting according to the rules of their caste. With all their desires satisfied, they are brave and settled in the ways of virtue and material gains. In Mallaka live śūdras, and (these) men behave righteously. O best brāhmaṇas, there is no king, no punishment, nor those who inflict punishment. Those men, knowing what is right, protect one another. This much only can be said about that island.

CHAPTER NINE

Śālmalika, Krauñca, Kuśa and Puṣkara Dvīpas and Their Mountains

Sūta said:

1. O illustrious ones, now listen to the account of the northern islands from me who am telling it.

2. There is an ocean having the water of clarified butter; another has the water of curds; then there is an ocean having the water of wine; and one more is an ocean of milk.

3. O best brāhmaṇas, these islands have double the size of one another (as they proceed northwards). O highly intelligent ones, there are also mountains surrounded by oceans.

4-6. In the middle island there is a large mountain (made of) minerals. In the western island there is the mountain Kṛṣṇa, that is the friend (i.e. favourite) of Nārāyaṇa, O brāhmaṇas. There Viṣṇu himself guards divine gems; and there, being pleased, he bestows happiness on creatures. In the centre of the country in the Śaradvīpa there is a clump of Kuśa (grass); O brāhmaṇas, the Śālmali (tree) is worshipped in the Śālmalika island.

7-9a. O best brāhmaṇas, on the Krauñca island is the Mahākrauñca mountain, which is a mine of heaps of gems. It is always adored by all the four castes. O brāhmaṇas, then there is the Gomanta mountain full of all minerals, where the glorious, lotus-eyed (Viṣṇu) always lives. The lord Nārāyaṇa, (also called) Hari is always in the company of those who have secured salvation.

9b-11. O best brāhmaṇas, in Kuśadvīpa is the mountain Sunāma (literally, of a good name) which is full of corals and is inaccessible. Another mountain, the golden mountain, is Dyutimān, O best of brāhmaṇas. The third is Kumuda mountain. The fourth mountain is called Puṣpavān, the fifth one is Kuśeśaya. The sixth is Harigiri. These six are the chief mountains.

12-14a. The distance between each of them becomes double (as we proceed from one to another). The first country is Audbhida; the second in Reṇumaṇḍala; the third one is Suratha, and the fourth one is known as Lambana. The fifth country is

Dhṛtimat, and the sixth country is Prabhākara. The seventh country is Kapila. These seven are in a straight line.

14b-16. O brāhmaṇas, in these gods and gandharvas and (other) creatures are cheerful and sport and enjoy. No man dies in these (divisions). O brāhmaṇas, there are no thieves there, nor the Mleccha tribes. O best ones, the people there are almost white and delicate. O best brāhmaṇas, O very wise ones, I shall describe as I have heard about the remaining islands.

17-20a. O illustrious ones, in Krauñcadvīpa, there is a large mountain called Krauñca. Next to Krauñca is the (mountain) Vāmanaka; next to Vāmana (or Vāmanaka) is Andhakāraka; next to Andhakāra (or Andhakāraka) is the best mountain Maināka, O brāhmaṇas. Next to Maināka, O brāhmaṇas, is the best mountain Govinda. Beyond Govinda is the great mountain Puṇḍarīka. Next to Puṇḍarīka is said to be the (mountain called) Dundubhisvana. Towards the east the distance between any two of the mountains becomes double.

20b-24a. I shall tell you about the countries there. Listen to me who am describing them. The country of Krauñca (i.e. in which Krauñca is situated) is Kuśala; that of Vāmana is Manonuga; O ascetics, the country beyond Manonuga is Uṣṇa. Beyond Uṣṇa is Prāvaraka. Andhakāraka is next to Prāvara. Munideśa is said to be next to Adhakāraka country. Dundubhisvana is said to be next to Munideśa. It is crowded with siddhas and cāraṇas. The men there have almost a white complexion. These regions are said to be resorted to by gods and gandharvas.

24b-32a. In (the island of) Puṣkara there is a mountain called Puṣkara which is rich in gems and jewels. The lord of beings himself moves there. All gods and great sages always wait upon him. O best brāhmaṇas, they worship him with agreeable words. Various gems proceed uninterruptedly from Jambudvīpa. O best sages, due to celibacy, truthfulness and restraint of the brāhmaṇas the span of life and the quality of health of the people in those islands go on doubling (as one goes) on (towards the north). O best ones, I have described to you the countries in which only one religion exists. The lord, the creator himself, having raised the rod of punishment always protects these islands. O brāhmaṇas, he is the king, he is the final beatitude, he is the father and the grandfather. O best

brāhmaṇas, he protects the creatures along with the brāhmaṇas and the wise. O glorious ones, the beings here daily eat the food that is ready and that itself approaches them.

32b-41. Beyond that a region called Samā (Or, beyond that a great mountain, the habitation of people) is seen. It is symmetrical and is round on all sides. O best brāhmaṇas, the four quarter-elephants, dear to the world and with their cheeks and mouths in rut, live there. O best sages, O brāhmaṇas, (they are:) Vāmana, Airāvata, Añjana and Supratīka. I do not venture to count their measure. The proportion—breadthwise, lengthwise and heightwise—is ever incalculable. There winds blow irregularly from all directions. O best sages, the elephants take them. They draw them with the very lustrous trunks resembling lotuses. Then they always again quickly let them out in a hundred ways. O best brāhmaṇas, the winds (thus) let out by the breathing elephants come (down), and the creatures live (by them). I have described to you the world along with its creation as desired (by you). O best brāhmaṇas having heard this measure of the earth, which gives merit and is agreeable, a rich person gets emancipated, has his objects accomplished, and is liked by the good. His span of life, strength, glory and lustre increase. The (fore-)fathers and grandfathers of him, who, having taken a vow, listens to this when narrated on a parvan-day, are pleased.

CHAPTER TEN

Dialogue between Nārada and Yudhiṣṭhira

The sages said:

1-2. Having heard the measure and the position of the earth, so also (having heard) about the rivers from you, we have just drunk nectar. We have heard that there are holy places on the earth. Describe them to us and also how they are fruitful. O very wise one, we desire to hear about them in detail from you.

Sūṭa said:

3-4. O you ascetics, you have asked about an excellent, meritorious, great account. I shall narrate it to the best of my knowledge, suitably and as I have heard it. I shall tell you the ancient conversation of the celestial sage Nārada with Yudhiṣṭhira. O best brāhmaṇas, listen.

5. The Pāṇḍavas, the sons of Pāṇdu, the illustrious great heroes, deprived of their kingdom, lived in the forest with Draupadī.

6. They saw the high-souled celestial sage Nārada, shining with brāhmaṇic lustre, and bright like blazing fire (who had come) there.

7. That celebrated descendant of Kuru, surrounded by those brothers (of him), shone with glowing splendour as Indra surrounded by gods in heaven.

8. As Sāvitrī did not abandon the gods, or as the sun's light does not leave Meru, Yājñasenī (i.e. Draupadī) did not, due to her piety, forsake the sons of Pṛthā (i.e. of Kuntī, i.e. the Pāṇḍavas).

9-10. That revered sage Nārada, having accepted the homage, consoled that son of Dharma (i.e. Yudhṣṭhira) with proper, well-formed and agreeable (words), and spoke to the noble Dharmarāja Yudhiṣṭhira: "O best among those who practise piety, what do you desire? What should I give you?"

11-14. Then king (Yudhiṣṭhira), the son of Dharma, having along with his brothers saluted Nārada, and with the palms of his hands joined, spoke to Nārada, resembling a god: "O you illustrious one, when you, revered by all the worlds, are pleased, then I think, (everything) is affected through your grace, O you of a good vow. O best sage, O sinless one, if you (are going to) favour me with my brothers, then (please) remove the doubt in my mind. O brāhmaṇa, (please) remove the doubt in my mind. O brāhmaṇa, (please) tell (us) fully about the fruit that he who, devoted to the holy places, goes round (over) the earth, gets."

Nārada said:

15-18. O king, listen attentively as to how formerly Dilīpa heard all this from Vasiṣṭha. In ancient times the best and very

lustrous king Dilīpa took up a religious vow and lived like a sage, O great king, at the auspicious, holy place Gaṅgādvāra on the bank of the Ganges resorted to by gods and gandharvas. He, of a great lustre, pleased (by offering oblations) his dead ancestors and gods. He also satisfied (by offering oblations) the sages with religious rites.

19-25. When the large-minded one was muttering (the names of a god) for some time, he saw the best sage Vasiṣṭha, resembling Śiva. When he saw that priest (of him) shining with glory, he was very much delighted and amazed. That best one among the righteous ones, took, according to the religious rites, the materials of worship on his head, and being pure and with his mind controlled, told his name to that best brāhmaṇic sage: "Well-being to you, I am Dilīpa, I am your servant, O you of a good vow. Just by seeing you I have become free from all sins." O great king Yudhiṣṭhira, that Dilīpa, controlled in speech, and best among men, speaking thus, folded the palms of his hands, and remained silent. Seeing that Dilīpa, the best king, emaciated due to his vow and muttering to himself, the sage was pleased.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Puṣkara, the Holiest of Holy Places

Vasiṣṭha said:

1. O you knowing what is right, O you illustrious one, I am fully pleased with you due to this your civility, restraint and truthfulness.

2. You who have such piety have emancipated your forefathers. Therefore, O son, you (are able to) see me; and O descendant of Manu, you are fit to be a sacrificer.

3. My affection for you increases; tell me today what I should do for you. O you sinless and best among men, I shall give you what you will ask for.

Dilīpa said:

4-7. O you who know the essence of the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, O you who are adored by all the worlds, I (think my desire) is satisfied in that I have seen you the lord. O best among the pious ones, if I deserve to be favoured by you then I shall ask you about a doubt (lurking) in my mind. Please remove it. I desire, O revered sir, to hear (your explanation) about the doubt that I have about the piety of each of the holy places. You should tell me separately (about each holy place). O best brāhmaṇa, O brāhmaṇic sage, O you abode of penance, tell me what fruit he, who goes round the earth, obtains.

Vasiṣṭha said:

8-12. I shall tell you who are devoted to me among the sages. O dear one, listen with a concentrated mind, the fruit (that one) gets by (visiting) holy places. He whose hands, feet and mind are well-restrained, and has learning, penance, and glory gets the fruit of (visiting) a sacred place. He who keeps himself away from accepting (things from others), is contented, controlled and pure, and free from pride, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a sacred place. He who is sinless, who goes without food, does not accept food, has his senses controlled, and who is free from all blemishes obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a sacred place. O lord of kings, he, who never gets angry, who is given to truthfulness, who is of a firm vow, who looks upon (other) beings like himself, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a holy place.

13-15. The sages have prescribed (certain) sacrifices even among (i.e. for) gods in due order. They have correctly and fully told about their fruit. O king, those sacrifices are not within the reach of the poor; (since) sacrifices require many implements and extensive preparations. They are within the reach of kings, or sometimes of rich people. They cannot (be performed) by groups of poor people independently (since they have) no means.

16-19. O king, listen to the rite which is within the reach even of poor people and which resembles (i.e. gives) the pious fruits of sacrifices. O best among the righteous, this, i.e. visiting the holy places, is pious and is the great secret of the sages,

and is superior even to (performing) sacrifices. A man, who visits a holy place without fasting for three nights, without giving gold and cows (to a brāhmaṇa) is born poor. A man does not obtain that fruit by performing sacrifices like Agniṣṭoma, where large gifts are given, which he obtains by a visit to a holy place.

20-35. A man would become like a god by reaching Puṣkara tīrtha which is a well-known holy place of the heaven, that (has come) to the earth and that is well-known. O king, there are ten thousand crores of holy places, which live by Puṣkara at all the three times of the day, O you descendant of the solar dynasty. O lord, Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, Sādhyas with hosts of Maruts, also gandharvas and celestial nymphs are present there. There, O great king, gods, demons and brāhmaṇic sages have practised penance and have secured divine contact due to great religious merit, O brāhmaṇas, and got what they desired. O wise ones, the Puṣkaras purify all the sins. They are valued in heaven. O glorious one, the grandsire, very much pleased and liked by gods and demons always lived at this holy place. O illustrious one, gods with sages going before them, have attained great accomplishment, and become endowed with great religious merit. The wise say that he who, engaged in honouring his forefathers and gods, bathes there, gets merit which is tenfold of (i.e. got by performing) a horse-sacrifice. If, while resorting to the Puṣkara forest he feeds just one brāhmaṇa, he thereby goes to honoured people living in Brahmā's abode. O king, he who, with the palms of his hands joined, remembers Puṣkaras in the morning and evening, has bathed (i.e. has acquired the merit of having bathed) in all the holy places. All that sin of a woman or a man, (committed) from birth perishes by just going to Puṣkara. O king, as Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu) is said to be the first among all the gods, similarly Puṣkara is said to be the first of the holy places. He, who, being restrained and pure, has lived at Puṣkara for twelve years, obtains (the fruit of) all sacrifices and goes to Brahmā's heaven. One who would practise (the vow of performing) Agnihotra for a hundred years, or would just live on one full moon day of Kārtika at Puṣkara, would have the same (merit). It is difficult to go to Puṣkara; it is difficult (to practise) penance at Puṣkara; it is difficult to give gifts at Puṣkara; it is

difficult to stay at Puṣkara. The three peaks are bright, and also the three streams, and the holy places like Puṣkara; we do not know the reason for that. One, being restrained, and controlled in food, having lived (i.e. who lives) for twelve years at Puṣkara, becomes free from all sins and would get the fruit of all sacrifices.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Visit to Some Holy Places and Its Merit

Vasiṣṭha said:

1-8. Turning round and moving to the right, he would approach the way to Jambu. Approaching the path of Jambu, adored by manes, gods and sages, he obtains (the fruit of) Aśvamedha and goes to Viṣṇu's world. A man going (from there) after having stayed there for five or six nights, does not meet with ill luck, but obtains best success. Returning from Jambumārga, he should go to Dulikāśrama. He does not meet with indigence and is honoured in heaven. O king, he who engaged in worshipping the forefathers and gods observes a fast for three nights after reaching the hermitage of Agastya, would obtain the fruit of (having performed) an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. By subsisting on vegetables or fruits he obtains the fruit of youthfulness; after reaching Kanyāśrama nourished with glory and revered by people, he is free from his sins the moment he enters it, since, O king, it is a meritorious and the best sacred grove. Being controlled and having limited food, he, after having worshipped his forefathers and deities, gets the fruit of a sacrifice full of (i.e. that satisfies) all desires. Having turned to the right, he would then go to Yayātipatana.

9-11. There he obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice. Being restrained and having controlled his diet, from here he should go to Mahākāla. After having bathed in Koṭitīrtha he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. Then, O you righteous one, he should go to the holy place, the abode of the lord of Umā (i.e.

Pārvatī). It is known as Bhadravaṭa, and is well known in the three worlds. Having approached Śiva there he would obtain the fruit of (a present of) a thousand cows.

12-13. O best man, by Mahādeva's (i.e. Śiva's) grace he would obtain the leadership which is fruitful and without a rival. Having reached Narmadā, well-known in the three worlds, and having offered oblations to his forefathers and gods (there) he would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Greatness of Narmadā

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-3. O Nārada, I desire to hear again about the best, well-known holy place called Narmadā, that rends the mountains of sins, which Vasiṣṭha described to Dilīpa. (O Nārada,) describe it to me. O best brāhmaṇa, also (tell me about) the greatness of Narmadā as described by Vasiṣṭha. O Nārada, tell me how this very pious river, known as Narmadā, is famous everywhere.

Nārada said:

4-5. Narmadā is the best of rivers; she destroys all sins; she would liberate all beings—immobile and mobile. I have heard the greatness of Narmadā as told by Visiṣṭha. O great king, know (i.e. listen to) it; I (shall) tell you the whole (of it).

6-14. Gaṅgā is holy at Kanakhala; Sarasvatī at Kurukṣetra; (but) Narmadā is holy everywhere—whether in a village or a forest. The water of Sarasvatī purifies (a man) within three days; that of Yamunā within seven days; that of Gaṅgā instantly; but that of Narmadā just by looking at it. In the western part of Kaliṅga country on the Amarakaṇṭaka mountain Narmadā is beautiful, charming and holy in the three worlds. O great king, the sages, with penance as their wealth, having practised penance here, along with gods, demons and gandharvas, have attained great prosperity. O great king, a man, following a vow and with

his senses controlled, having bathed there and having fasted for a night would liberate a hundred families. If a man, after having bathed at Janeśvara duly offered a ball of rice (to his dead ancestors), they remain pleased till the universal destruction. All around the mountain is settled Rudrakoṭi. There is no doubt that the entire Rudrakoṭi would be pleased with him who bathes there with sandal, flowers and unctions. At the western end of the mountain the great lord himself (resides). Being chaste and controlling his senses, a man should bathe there, be purified and should perform the rite (in honour) of the dead ancestors as enjoined in the sacred texts.

15-20a. There only he should gratify his divine manes with water with sesamum seeds. O Pāṇḍava, his family upto the seventh descendant stays in heaven. Crowded by the host of celestial nymphs, surrounded by celestial women, smeared with divine sandal (-paste), and adorned with divine ornaments, he is honoured in the heaven for sixty thousand years. Then having fallen from heaven, he is born in a large family. He is born rich, disposed to making presents and righteous. He again remembers that holy place, (and) again goes to (i.e. visits) it. Having liberated a hundred (members of) his family, he goes to Rudra's heaven. The best river is said (to be flowing over) a hundred yojanas in her later (course). O best king, her breadth is two yojanas.

20b-22. Round the mountain Amarakaṇṭaka there are sixty crores and sixty thousand holy places. Being chaste and pure, having conquered his anger and senses, and turned away from all (kinds of) harm, and engaged in the well-being of all creatures, thus being full of good conduct, he should go round the deities.

23-25a. O king, listen attentively to the fruit of his religious merit. O Pāṇḍava, he would live for a hundred thousand years in heaven crowded with the hosts of celestial nymphs and waited upon by celestial women. Smeared with divine sandal (-paste), and decorated with divine ornaments, he sports in the world of gods and rejoices with deities.

25b-28a. Then the powerful one, having fallen from heaven, becomes a king. He obtains a house decorated with many gems, with pillars decked with gems, divine diamonds and lapis lazuli.

It has divine paintings, endowed with male and female servants; and its gate is disturbed (i.e. is noisy) with the trumpetings of elephants and neighings of horses, as is the gate of Indra's house.

28b-34a. He, the lord of great kings, glorious and dear to all women, having lived in the house, having sports and enjoyments, would live for a hundred years without (suffering from) any disease. He who dies, or enters fire or water or fasts at Amarakaṇṭaka, would have such enjoyments. His course has no return, as is that of a mountain into the sky. When the man has a fall, he becomes the lord of men. In each of his houses thousand of maidens and women wait (upon him), and wait for his directions. Born with divine enjoyments he sports for eternal time. Like the man on the Amarakaṇṭaka mountain, none else is born on the earth upto the ocean, O best of men.

34b-44. To the west of the mountain the holy place (that exists) should be known as Koṭitīrtha. There is Rudra known as Kāleśvara, well-known in the worlds. By offering balls (of rice) to him and by offering the Sandhyā-prayers, the manes become satisfied for ten years. To the south of Narmadā, there is a great river Kapilā. She is covered with sarala and arjuna trees. She is not far away. She is very holy, auspicious and is known in the three worlds. O Yudhiṣṭhira, there is a full (group of) a hundred crores of holy places. O king, it is so reported in the Purāṇas. All this has a crorefold merit. The trees on her bank that fall due to lapse of time, get the best course due to being connected with her water. The other one, O glorious one, is holy and removes poignant pain. A man, by bathing there on her bank becomes free from poignant pain in a moment. All hosts of gods with kinnaras and great serpents, yakṣas, demons, gandharvas and sages rich in penance have all gathered there on the Amarakaṇṭaka mountain. All those and the sages also resorted to Narmadā, (and) the holy (river) named Viśalyā that destroys all sins was produced by them. O king, a man, being chaste, and with his senses controlled, who, after fasting for a night, bathes there, would liberate a hundred (members of) his family.

45-49. O best king, Viśalyā is said to be reddish and is (thus) declared in the Purāṇas by the lord with a desire for the good of the worlds. O king, having bathed there, a man would obtain the fruit of a hundred horse sacrifices. O lord of men, he

who observes a fast at that holy place, goes, with all his sins purified, to Indra's heaven. O lord of kings, I have heard in (i.e. learnt from) the Purāṇa that a man bathing anywhere in Narmadā obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice. Those who live on the northern bank, stay in Indra's heaven. O Yudhiṣṭhira, as Śaṅkara (himself) told me, the gifts (given at the bank of) and bath taken in Sarasvatī, Gaṅgā and Narmadā are equal in fruit.

50-54. He, who casts his life on the Amarakaṇṭaka mountain, is honoured for a full hundred crores of years in Indra's heaven. The water in (i.e. of) Narmadā is holy and is adorned with foam and ripples. It is pure, worth adoration. (A man bathing there) is free from all sins. Narmadā is all-holy; she removes the sin due to the murder of a brāhmaṇa; by fasting (on her bank) for a day and night a man is absolved of (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Thus, O son of Pāṇḍu, Narmadā is pleasing and holy. This great river purifies (all) in the three worlds at the very holy Vaṭeśvara and in the penance grove of Gaṅgādvāra. At all these places those that are afflicted and have fulfilled their vows (are liberated). At the confluence of Narmadā the merit is said to be tenfold.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Sages Pray to God Śiva for Protection from Demon Bāṇa

Nārada said:

1. The greatest river Narmadā, that is holy and most auspistrands is divided into three (streams) by the glorious sages, longing for piety.

2. O Pāṇḍava, the (three) divisions are just like (the three strands of) a sacred thread. O lord of kings, a man bathing in (any of) them is free from all sins.

3. O son of Pāṇḍu, listen to me who am telling you about the origin of the sacred place Jaleśvara which is well-known in the three worlds.

4-5. Formerly all hosts of sages and all the groups of Maruts with Indra praised that magnanimous Maheśvara, the god of gods. Praising him, they reached (the place) where god Maheśvara stayed. The hosts of Maruts with Indra prayed to him: "O Virūpākṣa, we are distressed with fear. O lord, protect us."

The lord said:

6-7. O best sages, welcome to you. For what purpose have you come here ? What is (the cause of) your grief ? What is (the cause of) your tormentation ? Wherefrom has fear come (to you) ? O glorious ones, tell (it); I desire to know it.

Thus addressed by Rudra, they, of unlimited vows, told him:

The sages said:

8-11. There is a terrible, very powerful demon, proud of his strength, well-known by the name Bāṇa, whose divine city (called) Tripura, remaining in the sky moves by his lustre. O Virūpākṣa, we are afraid of him; we have sought your refuge only. Protect us from this great distress; you are our great shelter. O lord of gods, please do this favour to all (gods) so that gods, being very much pleased, (would) live happily, O Śaṅkara. O lord, do that by which they will be extremely happy.

The god (i.e. Śiva) said:

12. I shall do all this. Do not be dejected. In a very short time I shall do what makes you happy.

13-14. Having comforted all of them, and remaining on the bank of Narmadā, the lord of gods thought over (the way) to kill him, O Pāṇḍava. 'How, in what manner, should I kill Tripura ?' Thinking like this he remembered Nārada at that time. Just due to his remembering (Nārada), Nārada came to him.

Nārada said:

15. O Mahādeva, order me for what purpose I was remembered (by you). O god, tell me what mission I have to carry out.

The lord said:

16-18a. O Nārada, go there where the city Tripura of Bāṇa, the lord of Dānavas, stands. Go quickly and do that. The husbands are like deities and the wives are like celestial nymphs. Due to their lustre, O Brāhmaṇa, Tripura moves in the sky. Going there, O lord of brāhmaṇas, give them a different advice.

18b-19a. Hearing the words of the lord, the sage of quick steps entered the city to alienate the hearts of the women (from their husbands).

19b-22. The celestial city adorned with gems of many kinds, shone. It was a hundred yojanas broad, and was doubly long. There only he saw Bāṇa, who was proud of his strength, who was adorned with garlands, ear-rings, armlets and a crown, who was covered with necklaces and gems, and who was decorated with silver. His wives were rich with gems and men were adorned with (ornaments of) gold. The very mighty lord of the demons got up on seeing Nārada.

Bāṇa said:

23-24. The celestial sage himself has come to my house. O best brāhmaṇa, materials of worship and water for washing feet must properly be given. He has come after a long time. O brāhmaṇa, rest (on) this seat.

He thus honoured Nārada who had come there. His wife, the chief queen named Anaupamyā (spoke):

Anaupamyā said:

25. O revered sir, in the human world, by which vow or religious observance or gift or penance are gods pleased ?

Nārada said:

26-34. He who gives a cow made of sesamum to a brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas, has (indeed) given the earth of nine islands along with the oceans. For an eternal period he enjoys with aeroplanes resembling crores of suns and satisfying all desires and rules for a very long time. There are various kinds of trees : hog-plum, wood-apple, grove of plantain

trees; so also kadamba, campaka and aśoka. (So also there are the days like) the eighth, fourth, twelfth and both the Saṃkrānti day and Viṣuva day and the beginning of a day—all these are auspicious. Those women who fast (on these days), having acquired merit, undoubtedly live in heaven. The ascetic women, free from the Kali-age, free from all sins, and engaged in fasting, do not move (in the mundane existence). O you beautiful lady, having heard like this, do as you desire.

Hearing the words of Nārada, the queen said (these) words: "O best brāhmaṇa, show favour to me. Accept the grifts as desired (by you). (I shall give you) gold, gems, jewels, garments and ornaments. O brāhmaṇa, I shall also give you what is difficult (for you) to obtain. (Please) accept it, O best brāhmaṇa; may Viṣṇu and Śiva be pleased."

Nārada said:

35-37. O lady, give (it) to someone else—to a poor brāhmaṇa. I am endowed with a good character and have devotion.

O best of Bharatas, having thus taken away their hearts, and having advised all of them, he went (back) to his own place. With their hearts drawn away and therefore with their hearts gone elsewhere, a flaw came about in the city of that magnanimous Bāṇa.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Greatness of Amarakaṇṭaka

Nārada said:

1-7a. O son of Kuntī, listen to (me telling you) and understand what you ask me about. In the meanwhile Rudra remained on the bank of Narmadā. The place is called Hareśvara, and is well-known in the three worlds. At that place Mahādeva, thinking about Tripura's murder, (stayed,) making Mandara the

bow, making Vāsuki the bow-string, standing with his feet a span apart, making Viṣṇu the best arrow, putting fire in the fore ; Vāyu was put at the mouth ; (making) the four Vedas the horses, (he made) the chariot full of all gods. The two gods, Aśvins, were on the wheels ; the disc-holder himself was the axle ; Indra himself was at the end of the bow; Vaiśravaṇa remained on the arrow. Yama was on the right hand and the terrible Kāla on the left. Gandharvas, well-known in the worlds, were placed on the radius of the wheels. Of this best chariot Prajāpati Brahmā was the charioteer.

7b-9. The lord of gods, making a chariot like this full of all gods, remaining stable, waited there for a thousand years. When the three cities, moving in the sky, came together, he pierced them with an arrow. Rudra, at that time, discharged an arrow towards Tripura.

10-11a Women lost their lusture, and their strength decayed. Thousands of portents appeared in the city. To destroy Tripura he took up the form of Kāla (i. e. god of death).

11b-14a. Similarly wooden figures laughed loudly. The paintings closed and opened their eyes. (The citizens) saw themselves decorated with (i. e. clad in) red garments in a dream. They also saw unusual things foreboding calamity. People that were at that place (i.e. in the city) saw these portents. Their strength and their intellect were destroyed by Śiva's anger.

14b-24. A great (i.e. strong) wind, greatest among winds, and resembling the one at the end of a yuga and called Saṁvartaka was discharged and it troubled their heads. The trees there burnt, and summits fell down. Everything was disturbed and there were lamentations, and loss of consciousness. All the gardens were shattered and were quickly burning. With blazing flames he (i.e. Fire) burnt it all. Trees, parks, houses of various kinds (were burnt). The blazing fire spread into the ten directions. Then stones were hurled into each of the ten directions. The very fierce flames of the fires were burning in thousands. The entire city that was burning looked like kiṁśuka (a tree with red blossoms). The (columns of) smoke could not go from one house to another. The Tripura city, burnt by Śiva's anger, crying, very unhappy and blazing was burning in all directions. The tops of the palaces were shattered in thousands. Many palaces vari-

gated with many gems and beautiful houses were burnt in various ways by the blazing fire. (The flames) destroyed the groves of trees and places of worship as well. In all temples they blazed and burnt. (People) touched (i.e. burnt) by fire sank into despondency and lamented in various tones. There the heaps of charcoal appeared like mountain-peaks.

25-26a. They praised the god of gods: 'O lord, protect me.' The demons, who, harassed by fire, had embraced one another were burnt there in hundreds and thousands.

26b-27. The gardens in the city were parched by fire, and the large lakes crowded with swans and ducks, and with lotus plants and lotuses were being burnt. They, extending up to hundreds of yojanas, were covered with fresh lotuses.

28. Palaces, decorated with gems and resembling mountain-peaks (in height), fell down, being completely burnt by fire, like waterless clouds.

29-31. The fire impelled by Śiva's anger cruelly burnt young and old along with women, birds and horses. Many men that had slept (alone, or) had slept with their wives, or in a close embrace with their sons, were burnt by the enemy of Tripura. In that city blazing with fire women resembling celestial nymphs, being struck by the flames of fire, fell on the ground.

32-34. A young woman of broad eyes and adorned with a necklace, who was blinded by smoke, and afflicted by flames, awoke; and thinking about her son, she fell on the ground. Some (other woman), having golden complexion, adorned with sapphires, blinded by smoke, fell down on the ground. Another friend (of her) who had held her hand, was burnt with children.

35-38. Due to this another female of a celestial form was seen to be perplexed by insanity. Joining the palms of her hands and putting them on her head, she requested Fire: "If you desire (i.e. harbour) enmity towards men who have harmed you, why do you offend women—the cuckoos in the cage in the form of the house? O sinner, O cruel one, O shameless one, what makes you angry with females? You do not possess chivalry, you do not have a feeling of shame, you are without purity; rich in beauty and complexion of various kinds, they are available. Tell us: Have you not heard in the world that women are not to be killed?

39-45. But these have become virtues for you—oppressing women, O Fire, and not having compassion, sympathy or courtesy towards them. O Fire, even Mlecchas are kind to women, when they see them. You are worse than Mlecchas, you are irresistible and senseless. O Fire, these are your virtues (leading you) to destroy. O you wicked one, why do you drop (yourself) on these women? O wicked Fire, O cruel and shameless one, O you unfortunate one, O you hopeless one, O you cruel one, you (that are) wicked are burning children." In this way they lamented and talked in many voices. Others, bewildered due to the grief for their (dead) children, were angry, and cried. The cruel and angry Fire burnt (everything) like an enemy. There were flames in the lakes, water, and in wells also. (The women cried:) "O Mleccha, by burning us, what condition will you reduce us to ?" When they were crying like this, Fire said (these) words:

Vaiśvānara said :

46-62. I am not destroying on my own. I only do what is ordered, and am not the one who can favour. Overcome with anger, I am here moving by chance.

Then that very lustrous Bāṇa seeing Tripura ablaze, and remaining on his seat, said to the god: "I am destroyed by gods. The weak and wicked ones (mis) informed the god. Without investigating properly, I am burnt by magnanimous Śiva. Except Maheśvara no other enemy is (able) to strike me." Taking the Phallus (called) Tribhuvaneśvara on his head, he got up. Leaving his friends, very beautiful gems, women of various kinds, and taking the Phallus on his head kept in the city, he praised Śiva, the god of gods, the lord of three worlds. "O Hara, if I have been tormented by you, you deserve to be killed. O Mahādeva, let my Phallus (i.e. which I am worshipping) not perish due to your grace. O Mahādeva, I have always worshipped it with great devotion. Even if I am to be killed by you, may my Phallus not perish. O Mahādeva, let me seize your feet. O Mahādeva, existence after existence, I am devoted to your feet." He (then) worshipped the highest god with the Toṭaka metre : "Om, Śiva, Śaṅkara, my salutation to Sarvakāra (i.e. who brings about everything). My salutation to Śiva, O Bhava, O Bhīma, O

Maheśa. O you destroyer of the body of Madana (i.e. Cupid), O you destroyer of Tripura, O you who crushed Andhaka, O you dear to women, O you who destroyed Kāma (i.e. Cupid), my salutations to you who are saluted by the hosts of gods and siddhas, and by (your) attendants having the faces of horse, monkey, lion, lord of elephants and having very short and very long faces. You were not vexed by the demons difficult to be found out; (on the contrary) you were saluted by many of them. O revered lord, you who like great devotion, O you stable one, O you who hold the digit of the moon (i.e. the crescent moon on your head), O god, I salute you. O Jaya, always give me hosts of sons and wives and wealth. With many, hundreds of bodies, I am tormented. You have today put me on the path of a great (i.e. fearful) hell. My sinful course is not turning away; he abandons me, pure due to pure deeds; (but) he takes pity on me; the direction is revolving; this delusion is rambling; he keeps off bad intentions." To him who, being controlled and of a pure mind, would recite this divine Toṭaka, Rudra would grant boons as he gave to Bāṇa. Hearing this very divine hymn lord Maheśvara was himself pleased with him at that time.

The lord said :

63-64a. O child, you should not be afraid. O demon, with your sons, grandsons, wives, and servants, remain in a golden (mansion). O Bāṇa, from today you will not be killed (i.e. will be immune from death) even by gods.

64b-66. O Pāṇḍava, the god of gods, again granted him a boon. Being fearless, indestructible and immutable he moved in the world. Then Rudra withdrew the seven-crested one, i.e., Fire. Magnanimous Śiva protected his third (city). By virtue of Rudra's lustre it always moves in the sky.

67-71a. Thus, Tripura burnt by the magnanimous Śiva fell on the ground blazing with rows of flames. He knocked down one on Śrīśaila near Tripura. He knocked the other one on Amarakaṇṭaka mountain. When Tripura was burnt, O king, Rudrakoṭi stood firm. The burning one was caused to fall there. Therefore, he is known as Jvāleśvara. His divine flame, going

upwards, went to heaven. There was then great lamentation among gods, demons and kinnaras. Rudra arrested that arrow in the best Maheśvara city.

71b-79a. O son of Pāṇḍu, he who, like this, would go to the mountain Amarakaṇṭaka, having well enjoyed the fourteen worlds for a thousand and thirty crore years and then having reached the earth, becomes a righteous king. There is no doubt that he enjoys as a sovereign emperor on the earth. O great king, this Amarakaṇṭaka is holy on all sides. The wise say that he who would go to Amarakaṇṭaka at the time of a lunar or solar eclipse, has tenfold (the merit) of a horse sacrifice. Seeing Maheśvara there, he obtains heaven. When the sun is eclipsed by Rāhu they will come together. That is the great merit of (performing) the Puṇḍarīka sacrifice. On Amarakaṇṭaka lives Jvāleśvara. Bathing there, men go to heaven. Those that die there, are not reborn. O great king, listen to the fruit which one gets by casting one's life at the lunar or solar eclipse at Jvāleśvara.

79b-82. Gods called Amara stay on Amarakaṇṭaka. (One who bathes) in the water on the slope of (Amarakaṇṭaka-) god Amareśvara, obtains (i.e. lives in) Rudra's heaven till deluge. Crores of gods, of good vows practise penance there. O king, the holy place Amarakaṇṭaka extends upto a yojana on all sides. A man, entertaining or not entertaining desire, having bathed in the holy water of Amarakaṇṭaka, would be freed from sins, and he goes to Rudra's worlds.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Kāverī Saṁgama Tīrtha

The sage said :

1-3. All those magnanimous multitudes of people with Yudhiṣṭhira as the chief, and the sages, the abodes of penance, asked Nārada: "O revered one, tell us for the good of the people and for our prosperity, the great truth about the confluence of Kāverī, that wicked men who are always engaged in sinful acti-

vities, become free from all sins and go to the highest place (on bathing there). We desire to know this. O revered one, please tell it."

Nārada said :

4-7. O you all led by Yudhiṣṭhira, listen together : Having performed a great sacrifice here, Kubera of truthful valour, became more than a sovereign emperor after reaching this place. O great king, he attained perfection. Listen to me who am telling it. Kubera, the lord of yakṣas and of truthful valour, having bathed at the place where Kāverī joins Narmadā well-known in the world, practised penance for a hundred divine years. Mahādeva, pleased with him, granted him an excellent boon : "O yakṣa, O you of a great energy, speak about the boon that you desire. Tell me freely about your wish, or whatever is in your mind."

Kubera said :

8. O lord of gods, if you are pleased with me, grant me the boon (by which) I would be the first lord of the yakṣas.

9. Hearing the words of Kubera, god Maheśvara was pleased. Saying, 'Let it be so', he disappeared there only.

10. That yakṣa too, who had obtained the boon, quickly went to the abode of yakṣas. He was honoured by all the lordly yakṣas, and was consecrated as the king.

11. Those men, who do not know that the confluence of Kāverī (with Narmadā) destroys all sins, are undoubtedly deceived.

12-17a. Therefore a man should make every effort to bathe there. Kāverī is very holy, and Narmadā is a great river. O best king, one should bathe there and worship Śiva. Having received the fruit of a horse sacrifice he is honoured in the world of Rudra. As Śaṅkara has told me, he who enters fire or observes a fast (at the confluence of Kāverī and Narmadā) is not reborn. Being waited upon by excellent women, he enjoys in heaven like Rudra for sixty thousand and sixty crore years. Remaining in Rudra's heaven he enjoys wherever he goes. Fallen due to the

exhaustion of his religious merit, he becomes a righteous, prosperous, religious, great king, born in a (noble) family.

17b-19. Having properly drunk water there, a man would obtain the fruit of the (vow called) Cāndrāyaṇa. Those men who drink the holy water (at the confluence), go to heaven. Men get the same fruit as they obtain (by bathing) in Gaṅgā and Yamunā by bathing at the confluence of Kāverī (with Narmadā). O lord of kings, the place of the confluence of Kāverī (with Narmadā) is holy, gives great fruit and destroys all sins.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Narmadā and the Holy Places on Her Northern Bank

Nārada said :

1-2. On the northern bank of Narmadā, there is an extensive holy place. It is known as Patreśvara, and is great and removes all sins. O king, having bathed there, a man rejoices with deities. Taking any form he likes, he sports for five thousand years.

3. Then a man should go to Garjana where Megha is present. By the power of that holy place, it has attained the name Indrajit.

4. Then he should go to (the holy place) Megharāva where there is the thundering of clouds. There the group Meghanāda has become prosperous due to boons.

5. Then O lord of kings, he should go to (the holy place) known as Brahmāvarta. O Yudhiṣṭhira, Brahmā is always present there.

6-7a. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he is honoured in Brahmā's heaven. Then, being restrained, and controlled in diet, (he should go to) the holy place Aṅgāreśvara. Being absolved of all sins, he goes to Rudra's world.

7b-8a. Then, O lord, he should go to the excellent Kapilātīrtha. O king, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of having given away a cow.

8b-9a. Then he should go to Kāñcītīrtha resorted to by the hosts of gods and sages. Having bathed there, O king, a man would obtain (i.e. go to) the heaven of cows.

9b-10a. O lord of kings, then he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Kuṇḍaleśvara. Near there, Rudra lives with Umā.

10b. O lord of kings, one who bathes there, cannot be killed even by gods.

11. Then he should go to Pippaleśvara, which destroys all sins. O lord of kings, he is honoured in Rudra's heaven.

12. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the pure Vimaleśvara. There is the beautiful Devaśikhā, put down by the god.

13-17. Casting my life there I would obtain (i.e. go to) Rudra's heaven. Then a man should go to Puṣkariṇī, and should bathe there. By just bathing there he would obtain half of Indra's seat. Narmadā is the greatest among the rivers. She has flowed forth from Rudra's body. She would liberate all immobile and mobile beings. The magnanimous lord, the god superior to all other gods, told (this) to the groups of sages, and especially to us. This excellent river Narmadā was praised by sages with a desire for the well-being of the worlds. She came out of Rudra's body. She always removes all sins. She is saluted by all creatures.

18-20a. She is also extolled by gods, gandharvas and celestial nymphs: "Salutation to you, O (river) of holy water, O you going to the ocean. Salutation to you who was taken out by the sages from Śiva's body. Salutation to you who are chosen by Dharma, O you of an excellent face; salutation to you, O you who are saluted by the host of sages. Salutation to you who purify the pure; salutation to you who are well-worshipped by the entire world."

20b-22. He, who, with a pure mind daily recites this hymn, if a brāhmaṇa, obtains (mastery over) the Vedas; if a kṣatriya, would be victorious; if a vaiśya, would be profited; if a śūdra, would get a good position. One who desires food, would always have it just by remembering her. God Maheśvara himself always resorts to Narmadā. Therefore the river should be looked upon as holy and remover of sins.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

More Tīrthas on the Bank of Narmadā

Nārada said :

1-7. Since then Brahmā and others, as well as the sages rich in penance, being free from lust and anger, resort to Narmadā, O king. Seeing the trident of the lord fallen at that place on the earth, the magnanimous Śiva narrated its importance. It came to be known as the great, most meritorious holy place Śūlabheda. He, who, having bathed there, would worship the god (Śiva), would obtain the fruit (of the gift) of a thousand cows. O king, he, who would pass three nights there, and would worship Mahādeva, would not be reborn. Then a man should go to Maheśvara, (then) to the excellent Narmadeśvara. (Then he should visit) the very meritorious Ādityeśvara. Then on worshipping Mallikeśvara with ghee and honey, he obtains the fruit of his existence. Then he should see (i.e. visit) Varuṇeśvara, the excellent Nirajeśvara. He gets the fruit of (visiting) all the holy places by seeing (i.e. visiting) these five. O lord of kings, he should go to the place where the battle was fought.

8-11. Koṭitīrtha is well-known where the demons were fought (with), and where these demons, proud of their strength, were destroyed. Seizing their heads he killed them who had gathered there. They installed (the representation of) Maheśvara with the trident in his hand. The point was placed there, therefore (the place) is known as Koṭitīrtha. By seeing that holy place, a man would physically go to heaven. At that time, due to meanness, Indra restrained (a man) by means of the wedge of his bolt. Since then, people's going to heaven has been checked.

12-13. O Pāṇḍava, after having offered a coconut with ghee, at the end (of this rite), by all means he should, holding a lamp on his head, go round the (representation of the) god. He gets all his desires satisfied. When he dies, he obtains Rudrahood, and is not born again in this world. Having gone to heaven, then having ruled as a king, he goes to Indra's paradise.

14-18. Similarly, having waited upon Mahādeva, a man who just bathes there gets the fruit of all sacrifices. Then, O lord of kings, a man should go to the very beautiful holy place—the ex-

cellent Agastyeśvara—that removes the sins of men. O king, a man, having bathed there, is absolved (of the sin) of killing a brāhmaṇa. A man with his senses controlled remaining in profound meditation, should bathe the representation of the god with ghee (on) the fourteenth day of the dark half of Kārtika. He, with twentyone members (i.e. descendants) of his family, would never be deprived of lordly position. He should present cows, shoes, an umbrella, and a blanket, and also food to all brāhmaṇas. It would have a crorefold merit.

19-21. Then O lord of kings, a man should go to the excellent Ravistava. Having bathed (i.e. if a man bathes) there, he would get a throne (i.e. would be a king). On the right bank of Narmadā, the place holy to Indra (and called Śakratīrtha) is well-known. Having fasted there for a night, he should bathe. Having bathed there he should properly worship Janārdana (i.e. Viṣṇu). He gets the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. He goes to Viṣṇu's world.

22-23. Thence he should go to Ṛṣitīrtha, which removes all the sins of men. A man, by just bathing there, is honoured in Śiva's world. There only is the very beautiful holy place of (i.e. named after) Nārada. By just bathing there, a man would obtain the fruit of (giving away) a thousand cows.

24-25. Then he should go to Devatīrtha, formerly fashioned by Brahmā. O king, having bathed there, a man is honoured in Brahmā's world. Then he should go to Amarakaṇṭaka, formerly established by gods. Having just bathed there, a man would obtain the fruit of having given away a thousand cows.

26-27. Then he should go to Vāmaneśvara. Seeing Vāmanaka there, he is absolved of the sin of killing a brāhmaṇa. Thence a man should go to Ṛṣitīrtha, and certainly to Īśāneśa. Then having gone to (i.e. if he visits) Vaṭeśvara, he obtains the fruit of his existence.

28-29. Thence a man should go to Bhīmeśvara, which destroys all diseases. A man, O king, by just bathing there is free from all misery. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Varaṇeśvara. Having bathed there, a man is free from all misery, O king.

30-31. Then he should go to Somatīrtha and should see Candra. O king, then, being full of great devotion, having bath-

ed there, he, obtaining a celestial body just at that moment, enjoys like Śiva for a long time. He is honoured for sixty thousand years in Śiva's heaven.

32-36. Then O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place of) Piṅgaleśvara. By fasting for a day and night (there) he would obtain the fruit of (having fasted for) three nights. O lord of kings, he who gives a tawny cow (to a brāhmaṇa) at that holy place, is honoured in Rudra's world for as many thousand years as there are hairs on his body and on the bodies of the members born in his family. O king, he who casts his life there, enjoys eternally as long as the moon and the sun will remain in the sky. Those men who, having resorted to the bank of Narmadā, die (there), go to heaven as the men of good deeds go.

37-41. Then on the day of Gaṅgāvataraṇa, he should go to Surabhikeśvara and (the holy place called) Nāraka and Koṭikeśvara. He is blessed; no doubt about it. Thence going to Nanditīrtha, he should bathe there. Lord of Nandi (i.e. Śiva) is pleased, and the man is honoured in Soma's heaven. Then he should go to Dīpeśvara, and the penance-grove (called) Vyāsatīrtha. Formerly the great river turned back from there, being afraid of Vyāsa. Then, when he uttered the sound 'hum', she went (i.e. flowed) towards the south. O king, he who circumambulates at the holy place, has Vyāsa pleased with him, and he gets the desired fruit. He who puts a thread round (the representation of) the god along with the altar, sports for eternal time; and he is as Rudra is (i.e. becomes Rudra-like).

42-47. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent sacred place (called) Eraṇḍī. Having bathed (there) at the confluence, he is absolved of all sins. Eraṇḍī is well-known in the three worlds (as) destroyer of sins. Or (on) the eighth of the bright fortnight in the month of Āśvina, a man having bathed, and being pure and intent upon fasting, should feed one brāhmaṇa, (thereby) a crore (of brāhmaṇas) are fed. Having bathed at the confluence at Eraṇḍī, and delighted in devotion, a man, having placed a pearl-oyster on his head, and having plunged into the water mixed with that of Narmadā, gets absolved of all sins. O king, he who would circumambulate at that holy place, goes round the earth consisting of seven islands.

48-51. Then having bathed at Suvarṇatilaka and having given gold (to a brāhmaṇa) he is honoured in Rudra's world with a golden mansion. Then fallen from heaven after (some) time, he becomes a powerful king. Thence, O lord, he should go to the confluence of the river Ikṣu. It is well-known in the three worlds. Śiva is present there. O king, having bathed a man would attain the status of the head of the attendants of Śiva. Thence he should go to Skandatīrtha which destroys all sins. Sin committed from birth goes away merely by bathing there.

52-57a. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Āṅgirasa, and should bathe there. He gets the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. He is honoured in Rudra's heaven. From there he should go to Lāṅgalatīrtha which destroys all sins. Having gone there, O lord of kings, he should bathe there. There is no doubt that (thereby) he becomes free from sins committed during seven existences. Hence he should go to Vaṭeśvara, the best of all holy places. O king, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. From there, he should go to the great (holy place called) Saṅgameśvara which removes all sins. Having bathed there one gets a kingdom. There is no doubt about it. All that (merit) of the man who, after reaching Bhadratīrtha, gives gifts, would become a crorefold in effect by the power of that sacred place.

57b-58a. If a woman bathes there, she would become like Gaurī, and undoubtedly goes to Indra.

58b-62. Then he should go to Aṅgāreśvara, and should bathe there. A man, merely by bathing there, is honoured in Rudra's world. On the Aṅgārakī caturthī (i.e. caturthī falling on a Tuesday) he should bathe there. Being instructed by Viṣṇu, he rejoices eternally. Having bathed at Ayonisaṅgama, he should see the Yonimandira. Having gone to Pāṇḍaveśvara, he should bathe there. He cannot be killed by gods or demons, and rejoices eternally. Then going to Viṣṇu's heaven, he is full of sport and enjoyments. Having enjoyed great pleasures there, he is born as a king in the mortal world.

63. He should go to Kambotikeśvara and should bathe there. When the summer solstice arrives, whatever he would desire would take place.

64. Thence he should go to Candrabhāgā and bathe there. A man by just bathing there is honoured in Soma's world.

65-69a. Then, O king of kings, he should go to the holy place of Śakra (i.e. Indra), which is well-known, and is honoured by the king of gods. He should give gold as a gift. Or he who would give a bull of a dark colour, would live in Hara's city for as many thousand years as there are hairs on the body of the bull, and on the bodies of those that are born in his family. Then having fallen from heaven, he becomes a powerful king; and by the power of that holy place, he becomes, among thousands of mortals, the master of horses of white colour.

69b-74. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Brahmāvarta. Having bathed there, he should offer oblations to his divine manes by giving a piṇḍa according to the proper rites after having fasted for a night. When the Sun has entered Virgo, (this merit) would be stored eternally. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent holy place (called) Kapilātīrtha. O king, he, who, after bathing there, gives a tawny cow (to a brāhmaṇa), would get the fruit which would be got by giving the entire earth. Narmadeśvara is a great holy place. There has not been or will not be (other) holy place (like this). O king, having bathed there, a man would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. (A man who has gone there) is born as a sovereign emperor on the earth; he is perfect with all (good) characteristics and free from all diseases.

75-80. On the northern bank of Narmadā, there is a very auspicious holy place (called) Ādityāyana; it is charming and is created by the lord. O lord of kings, the gift given there after having bathed there becomes inexhaustible by the power of that holy place. Those that are poor, or diseased, or those that have done wicked deeds, are absolved of all sins, and go to the Sun's world. On the seventh of the bright fortnight when the month of Māgha has come, he who, without food, and with his senses controlled, would live in the temple, never suffers from diseases, does not become blind or deaf. Being fortunate and endowed with handsomeness, he becomes dear to women. This holy place is said to be very holy by Mārkaṇḍeya. O lord of kings, those who do not go there are undoubtedly deceived.

81-85a. Thence he should go to Māseśvara, and should

bathe there. A man merely by bathing there, would obtain heaven. Remaining in all worlds, he rejoices as long as fourteen Indras rule. Then remaining in the penance-grove called Nāgeśvara which is nearby, and having bathed there, O lord of kings, and being pure and concentrated, he sports for eternal time with many Nāga damsels. He should go to Kubera's abode, where Kubera stays. Kāleśvara is a great holy place where Kubera was pleased. Bathing there, O lord of kings, he would obtain all wealth.

85b-88. Then he should go westward to the best abode of the Maruts. Having bathed there, O lord of kings, being pure and concentrated, the intelligent one should then give gold and food according to his capacity. He goes to Vāyu's world by the Puṣpaka aeroplane. O Yudhiṣṭhira, then in the month of Māgha he should go to my Tīrtha. On the fourteenth day of a dark fortnight he should bathe there. Then he should eat at night, and should not go to Yonisaṁkaṭa.

89-97a. Thence he should go to Ahalyātīrtha. After merely having bathed there, he rejoices with celestial nymphs. Ahalyā got liberated after having practised penance at the Parameśvara (tīrtha). When the thirteenth day of the bright half of Caitra has arrived, he should, on that day holy to god Cupid, worship Ahalyā. A man who is born anywhere (i.e. in any family), would be dear there. He would be dear to women, would be prosperous and like another god of love. Having reached Ayodhyā, (he should visit) the well-known Śakratīrtha. Having merely bathed there, a man would obtain the fruit of (giving) a thousand cows. Thence he should go to Somatīrtha and just bathe there. A man who has just bathed there, is absolved of all sins. On (the day of) the planet Moon, O lord of kings, it would remove all sins. O king, Somatīrtha is well-known in the three worlds, and gives a great fruit. O lord of men, he, who observes there the Cāndrāyaṇa vow, goes, after his soul is purified from all sins, to Soma's heaven. He who dies at Somatīrtha by entering fire or in the water or by living without food, is not born in the mortal world.

97b-100. Thence he should go to Stambhatīrtha, and should bathe there. By merely bathing there, a man is honoured in Soma's heaven. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the excel-

lent Viṣṇutīrtha. The excellent Viṣṇutīrtha is (also) well-known as Yodhanīpura. Vāsudeva fought with crores of demons there. There a holy place came up; and here (i.e. at this holy place) Viṣṇu would be pleased. By observing a fast day and night, he keeps off (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

101-104a. Then O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Tāpaseśvara. It is known as Amohaka. There he should offer oblations to his manes. On the full moon or the new moon day he should offer a śrāddha according to the proper rite. Having bathed there, O king, he should offer piṇḍa to his manes. In it stand stones of the form of elephants. At that (holy place) he should offer piṇḍa—especially in (the month of) Vaiśākha. His manes remain pleased as long as the earth will remain.

104b-121. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Siddheśvara. Going there he should go near Gaṇapati. From there, he should go to the place where there is Janārdana (as a) liṅga. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he is honoured in Viṣṇu's world. On the right bank of Narmadā there is a very auspicious holy place. This great Kāmadeva (i.e. god of love) practises penance there. For a thousand divine years he worships Śiva. During the time of his abstract meditation he was burnt by the magnanimous Śiva. On the day of the bright parvan (i.e. the full moon day) the fire resembled a white mountain. All those remaining with Cupid were burnt and they lived at Kusumeśvara. After a thousand divine years the great lord (Śiva) was pleased with them. Rudra, the giver of boons, was, along with Umā, pleased with them. All they remaining on the bank of Narmadā were liberated. By the power of that holy place they again attained godhead. 'O Mahādeva, let the holy place be excellent by your favour.' The holy place has extended up to half a yojana all around. A man, given to fasting, having bathed at that holy place is honoured in the form of Cupid in Rudra's heaven. Yama, Kāmadeva, Vaiśvānara and Vāyu who had formerly come there, practised penance there only. A man who within the limit of half a yojana from there, near Andhona, not far away from the holy place, bathes, gives gifts, (gives) food (to brāhmaṇas), offers piṇḍas, enters fire, or water, or fasts, is never reborn after dying there. The best man should bathe himself with the water

sacred to Tryambaka. The manes of him, who duly offers piṇḍas at the root of Andhona, remain pleased as long as the moon and the sun remain (in the sky). A man or a woman who bathes there when the sun enters the northern solstice, would, (being) pure, live in the abode (of Siddheśvara) (and) the man, would obtain, by worshipping Siddheśvara in the morning, that status of the good which cannot be obtained by (performing) great sacrifices; and during the time of his stay at the holy place, an ugly man becomes handsome. In the mortal world, he becomes the king (of the earth) upto the oceans. (If) he would not see Kṣetrapāla, and the mighty Daṇḍapāla his pilgrimage would be fruitless, (also) by not seeing (i.e. visiting) Karṇakuṇḍala.

122. Having learnt this fruit of (the visit to) sacred places, all the gods that had assembled there, showered flowers and praised Kusumeśvara.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Śuklatīrtha

Nārada said :

1-2a. Thence he should devoutly go to Bhārgaveśa where the demons were destroyed by god Viṣṇu with his huṁkāra sound. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he is free from all sins.

2b-6. O son of Pāṇḍu, also listen to the (description of) Śuklatīrtha. Mārkaṇḍa, seeing god (Mahādeva) with Umā, who was seated on the peak of Himālaya which was charming, variegated with various minerals, which resembled the young sun and heated gold, which had the staircase of strong crystals, which had a slab of stone with a variegated strap, which was golden, which was divine and adorned with many lotuses, asked (Mahādeva) who was omniscient, who was the immutable lord, who favoured the worlds, who was surrounded by the hosts of attendants and by Skanda, Nandi, Mahākāla, and attendants like Vīrabhadra :

7. "O Mahādeva, god of gods, praised by (gods like) Indra and Kāma, I am afraid of the worldly existence. Tell me the means of happiness.

8. O you revered lord, the lord of what has been and what will be, O you great god, describe to me the greatest among the holy places, destroying all sins."

The lord said:

9-29a. O illustrious brāhmaṇa, well-versed in all branches of knowledge, go, surrounded by the groups of sages, and have a bath etc. The sages Manu, Atri, Yājñavalkya, Kaśyapa, and Aṅgiras, Āpastamba, Saṁvarta, Kātyāyana, Bṛhaspati, Nārada and Gautama, desiring to secure righteousness asked him. At Kanakhala Gaṅgā is holy; and also Prayāga, Puṣkara and Gayā (are holy places). When the Sun is swallowed by Rāhu (i.e. on a solar eclipse day) Kurukṣetra also is holy. By day or at night, Śuklatīrtha gives a great fruit. On seeing it, touching (i.e. having contact with) it, bathing there, meditating, practising penance, (or performing) a sacrifice, (or by) fasting Śuklatīrtha gives great fruit. Śuklatīrtha is very holy and is well situated on the river. A royal sage named Cāṇikya attained perfection there. This holy place that sprang up extends over a yojana. Śuklatīrtha is very holy; it destroys all sins. When seen from the top of a tree it removes (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. O best sage, I stay here with Umā. During the pure month of Vaiśākha, on the fourteenth day of the dark half, I go out from Kailāsa and stay there. Gods, kinnaras, gandharvas, siddhas, vidyādharas, my attendants, nāgas, and all gods gather here; and remaining in the sky they have aeroplanes satisfying all desires. O lord of kings, those who desiring piety, come to Śuklatīrtha, (have their sins washed) as a garment is made (i.e. washed) white by a washerman. The sin collected from birth melts away at Śuklatīr-tha. Even if he dies within the limit of half a yojana (of this holy place) he is not reborn. O Mārkaṇḍa, best of the sages, giving gifts and bathing (at this holy place) give a great merit. A holy place superior to Śuklatīrtha was never there nor will be there. A man having committed sins during his youth, removes (i.e. is free from) them by observing a fast for a day and night at Śuklatīrtha. That perfection which is had by means of penance,

self-restraint, sacrifices, giving gifts and offering presents to deities, is not had even by (performing) hundreds of sacrifices. On the fourteenth day of the dark half of Kārtika a man should observe a fast and bathe (the image of) the lord with ghee. He, along with (members of his family) till the twentyfirst (descendant) will not fall from the divine position. Śuklatīrtha is a great holy place. It is resorted to by sages and siddhas. O king, having bathed (i.e. if he bathes) there, he is not reborn. Having bathed at Śuklatīrtha, he should worship Śiva. He should keep awake (during the night) by (resorting to) auspicious (things) like dancing, singing etc. In the morning he should bath in the Śuklatīrtha, and worship the deities. Being pure and devoted to Śiva's vow, he should then feed his preceptor according to his capacity; then he should take food; he should not be dishonest about wealth. Then after circumambulating he should gently approach the deity.

29b-36. Listen to the meritorious fruit that he who does like this, gets. Having got into a celestial car, being extolled by bevies of celestial nymphs and endowed with strength like that of Śiva, he lives till deluge. Listen to the meritorious fruit that a woman who gives pure gold (to a brāhmaṇa) at Śuklatīrha and would bathe Kumāra (i.e. Kārtikeya) with ghee and worship him—who does like this devoutly—obtains. As long as the fourteen Indras live in heaven he rejoices. He having fully restrained himself and composed, having bathed and observed a fast during the period of the sun's passage—north or south of the equator, on the fourteenth day, on a Saṁkrānti dayor on (the day of) the equinox, should give gifts according to his capacity. (Thereby) Viṣṇu and Śiva would be pleased. By the efficacy of Śuklatīrtha all (this) becomes inexhaustible. Listen to the meritorious fruit which he who carries a helpless person, an indigent brāhmaṇa, or even one who is dependent, obtains. He is honoured in Śiva's heaven for as many thousand years as the number of hairs (on the bodies of the persons) that are born in his family.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Naraka, Kapilātīrtha, Ṛṣitīrtha, Gaṇeśvara, Bhṛgutīrtha, Somatīrtha etc.

Nārada said:

1-12. Then he should go to (the holy place called) Naraka. He should bathe there. Merely by bathing there a man does not see (i.e. go to) hell. O you son of Pāṇḍu, listen to the greatness of this holy place. O lord of kings, all the bones which he would drop there, are dissolved, and the man becomes handsome. O lord of kings, thence a man should go to the excellent (holy place called) Kapilātīrtha. O king, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. The man, who, when the month of Jyeṣṭha has come and especially on the fourteenth day, observes a fast devoutly, gives a tawny cow, and burning a lamp with ghee, bathes Śiva with ghee, and offers a coconut along with ghee, and in the end goes round, and gives a tawny cow with a bell and (other) ornaments (to a brāhmaṇa), becomes like Śiva, and is not born again. When Tuesday has come, especially on the fourth day (falling on Tuesday), a man should devoutly bathe (the image of) Śiva and give food to brāhmaṇas. When the ninth or the new moon day falls on a Tuesday, he should carefully bathe (the image of) Śiva. (Thereby) he would be handsome and fortunate. He should bathe the Phallus with ghee and devoutly honour brāhmaṇas. Surrounded by thousands, he (going in) Puṣpaka aeroplane, obtains the position of Śiva. He would not come here (i.e. to this world) again. He rejoices for an eternal time, and he becomes like Rudra. When the most righteous one comes to the mortal world due to his contact with (the fruits of) his deeds, he becomes a king, and becomes handsome and strong.

13-14a. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Ṛṣitīrtha. There the sage Tṛṇabindu, burnt my curse, resided. By the efficacy of that holy place a brāhmaṇa becomes free from sins.

14b-16a. O lord of kings, thence a man should go to the excellent Gaṇeśvara. Merely by bathing there on the fourteenth day when the month of Śrāvaṇa has come (i.e. on the fourteenth

day of Śrāvaṇa) a man is honoured in Rudra's heaven. By offering oblations to the manes he becomes free from the three debts (to sages, gods and the manes).

16b-25. Near Gaṇeśvara there is the excellent (holy place called) Gaṅgāvadana. A man who would bathe there with some desire or without any desire would undoubtedly be free from sins committed from birth. He should always bathe there on a parvan day. Having offered oblations to the manes he becomes free from the three debts. That entire merit is had at Gaṅgārāhvarka confluence, which was seen at Prayāga by the magnanimous Śiva. To a place in its west, near it, not far away there is (the holy place) called Daśāśvamedhika, well-known in the three worlds. A man having fasted for a night on the new moon day in the month of Bhādrapada, and having bathed, would go to the place where Śiva (dwells). He should always bathe there on a parvan day. Having offered oblations to the manes he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. To the west of Daśāśvamedha, Bhṛgu, the best brāhmaṇa, worshipped the lord for a thousand divine years. He remained under an anthill; and to the right was the abode (of the lord). Umā and Śiva were amazed. Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī) asked the lord : "O great lord, who is dwelling here ? Tell me whether he is a god or a demon."

The lord said:

26. O dear one, the best brāhmaṇa named Bhṛgu, and best among the sages, remains in deep meditation and reflects upon me; he desires a boon.

27. On hearing this the goddess laughed and said to the lord: "The tuft of his hair has become like whirling smoke. Still you are not pleased. Therefore you are difficult to be propitiated. There is no doubt it."

God said :

28. O great goddess, you do not know; he behaves wrathfully. I shall show you the fact, and shall do what is dear to you.

29. Then the lord of gods brought to his mind his bull (i.e.

Nandi). Immediately on being remembered, the god's bull came there.

30. He spoke in a human voice: "O lord, order me." (The lord said:) "The brāhmaṇa is covered with anthill; knock him down on the ground."

31-32. He who was engrossed in abstract meditation, and who was reflecting (upon the lord) was knocked down by him. Then getting hot with anger in a moment, he raised his hand and said to the bull, "O bull, where will you talking like this go (now)? I shall today actually kill you—a wicked one."

33-45. Then the brāhmaṇa challenged the bull gone into the air. He saw him in the sky; O king, this was a very great wonder. Then, when Rudra laughed, the sage stood before him. Seeing his third eye, he fell on the ground through shame. Saluting the highest lord (by prostrating himself before him) like a staff, he extolled him. Having saluted the lord of beings and the origin of the mundane existence (he praised him:) "Afraid of the worldly life, O lord of the world, I beg of you of a divine form, a little welfare. O lord, which man is able to describe the multitudes of your qualities ? Perhaps Vāsuki, who has a thousand mouths may be able (to do so). O Śaṅkara, O lord of the earth, O revered one, forgive me; be gracious to me who am devoutly garrulous in your praise, and who have fallen at your feet. You are sattva, rajas and tamas. You (are the cause of) the maintenance, creation and destruction (of the world). O lord of the world, O master of the world, excepting you, there is no (other) deity. All this—self-control, vows, sacrifices, gifts, Vedic studies, efforts like determination—does not deserve (is not equal to) even the sixteen thousandth part of your devotion. The signs like the sword of the excellent elixir of life or going on foot by people, are clearly seen in the case of people who have bowed down to you in this existence. Even if a man salutes you fraudulently, you give Dharma to him, O you god of those who long for you. O lord, devotion has been produced to cut off the worldly existence and for liberation. O great lord, protect me who am taking delight in another's wife or wealth, who am tormented by insult and great grief, and who am scorched by false pride, who sported with the grandeur lasting for a moment, who am prone to cruel ways and who am fallen. Though the

direction is full of the groups of the helpless sense organs, like relatives, yet it is worthless. O Śaṅkara, why do you mock at me—a fool? O Mahādeva, remove my thirst (i.e. desire) quickly, give me wealth that would always remain in my heart; cut off the nooses of pride and delusion; liberate me."

46. This hymn named 'Karuṇābhyudaya' is divine and gives perfection. Śiva is pleased with him, as with Bhṛgu, who recites it devoutly.

The lord said:

47. O brāhmaṇa, I am pleased with you; ask for the boon desired by you.

The god along with Umā would give him a boon.

Bhṛgu said:

48. O lord of gods, if you are pleased with me, if a boon is to be given to me, then let there be Rudravedi (here). (Please) bring this about for me.

The lord said:

49-52a. O best of brāhmaṇas, there will be Krodhasthāna (i.e. place of anger). There will be no agreement between father and son.

Since then all gods like Brahmā, along with kinnaras, worship Bhṛgutīrtha, where Śiva was pleased. By seeing (i.e. visiting) that holy place a man is instantly free from sin. The creatures, helpless or independent, who die there, would undoubtedly go along the course of the very secret one (i.e. Brahman).

52b-57. This holy place is very extensive, and destroys all sins. Having bathed there men go to heaven; and those who die there, are not reborn. He should give sandals, an umbrella, food and gold and meal according to his capacity. It would be eternal. One should give according to his desire gifts on the day of the solar eclipse, and also bathe at the holy place—all this gives inexhaustible merit. Giving a bull on a lunar eclipse day or solar eclipse day is excellent. O king, foolish men, deluded by Viṣṇu's illusion do not know the divine Vṛṣatīrtha situated on (the bank

of) Narmadā. A man, who (even) once listens to the greatness of Bhṛgutīrtha, is free from all sins, and he goes to Rudra's world.

58-59a. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place) Gautameśvara. Having bathed there, O king, and absorbed in observing a fast, he is honoured in Brahmā's world (after going there) in a golden aeroplane.

59b-62. He would then go to Dhautapāpa, where the bull washed (his sins). O king, it is situated on (the bank of) Narmadā, and destroys all sins. A man, having bathed at that holy place, is absolved of (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. O great king, he who casts his life at that holy place, gets four hands and three eyes and becomes as powerful as Rudra. Valourous like Rudra, he would stay for a complete myriad of years (in Rudra's heaven). Having come to the earth after a long time, he would be a sovereign emperor.

63-67a. From there he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Eraṇḍitīrtha. O king, the man who just bathes there gets the same fruit as Mārkaṇḍeya told about Prayāga. In the month of Bhādrapada, and on the eighth of the bright half, a man should observe a fast for a night and should bathe there. He would not be troubled by the messengers of Yama, and he goes to Indra's heaven. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to that holy place where Viṣṇu dwells. It is known as Hiraṇyadvīpa and destroys all sins. O king, having bathed there, a man becomes rich and handsome.

67b-69. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the great (holy place called) Kanakhala. O king, at that holy place Garuḍa practised penance. It is well known in all the worlds. Yoginī (i.e. Durgā) dwells there. She plays with the meditating saints and dances with Śiva. O king, one who bathes there, is honoured in Rudra's world.

70. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Īśatīrtha. There is no doubt that Īśa became free there and went up.

71-72. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to that holy place where Viṣṇu, the inconceivable lord, having resorted to the form of a boar, dwells. A man having bathed at Varāhatīrtha, especially on the twelfth, obtains Viṣṇu's heaven, and does not go to hell.

73-76. Then O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Somatīrtha. He should bathe there especially on the full moon day. Bali having saluted the lord, is pleased with him. In the atmosphere is seen the celestial city of Hariś-candra. When Cakradhvaja (wheel-bannered one) returned, and Garuḍa-bannered one was asleep, the force of Narmadā's water resorted to Rurukaccha. Viṣṇu told Śaṅkara to stay there. Having bathed at Dvīpeśvara, a man would get great happiness.

77-82. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to (the holy place called) Rudrakanyā on the confluence. Merely by bathing there, a man would obtain the position of the goddess. Then he should go to Devatīrtha saluted by all gods. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he rejoices with deities. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to (the excellent holy place called) Śikhitīrtha. A gift given there becomes a crore times meritorious. On the new moon day in the dark half of the month he should bathe there. He should feed a brāhmaṇa. Thereby a crore (of brāhma-ṇas) is fed. O lord of kings, at Bhṛgutīrtha a crore of holy places are settled. A man having no desire, or having a desire, should bathe there. He obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and rejoices with deities. The best sage Bhṛgu obtained perfection there. The magnanimous Śaṅkara descended there.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Vīhageśvara, Narmadeśvara, Aśvatīrtha, Pitāmaha, Sāvitrītīrtha, Mānasa etc.

Nārada said:

1. O lord of kings, from there he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Vihageśvara.

2. O lord of kings, by seeing it, he is free from all sins. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Narmadeśvara. O king, having bathed there he is honoured in heaven.

3. From there a man should go to Aśvatīrtha and should bathe there. He becomes prosperous, handsome and happy.

4-5. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Pitāmaha, formerly fashioned by Brahmā. A man having bathed there should devoutly offer oblations to his dead ancestors. He should offer water mixed with sesamum and darbha. By the efficacy of that sacred place, everything becomes inexhaustible.

6-7. He, who, on reaching Sāvitrītīrtha, would bathe (there), is, after having shaken off all his sins, honoured in Brahmā's heaven. Just there is a beautiful and extremely auspicious sacred place. O king, having bathed there, a man is honoured in the world of manes.

8. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent holy place (called) Mānasa. O king, having bathed there, a man is honoured in Rudra's world.

9-10. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Kratutīrtha. It is well-known in all worlds and destroys all sins. O king, having bathed there, he would obtain all the desired objects like beasts, sons, wealth which he prays for.

11. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the well-known holy place called Tridaśadyoti.

12-13. There those daughters of sages of good vows practised penance (with the desire): 'May the immutable lord, the master, be our husband.' Mahādeva i.e. Hara, the highest lord, taking up a fierce form, of a deformed face and loathsome, came to that sacred place. There the maidens, O great king, (practised penance) for a boon.

14-15a. He who would go to Kanyāṛddhi, gives a daughter (i.e. gets the merit of giving a daughter in marriage). There O great king, is a well-known sacred place (named) Daśakanyā. Having bathed there he should worship the lord. (Thereby) he is free from all sins.

15b-16a. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the sacred place known as Svargabindu. Having bathed there, O king, a man never meets with misfortune.

16b-17a. From there he should go to Apsareśa, and should bathe there. Remaining in the world of Nāgas he sports and rejoices with celestial nymphs.

17b-31. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the ex-

cellent (sacred place called) Narakatīrtha. Having bathed there, he should go to Bhārabhūta. Having reached this holy place, which is a manifestation of Śiva, and having worshipped Virūpākṣa (i.e. Śiva) there, he is honoured in Rudra's heaven. The magnanimous man, bathing at the holy place Bhārabhūta, gets the position of Śiva, wherever he may be dead. The wise say that worshipping Śiva during the month of Kārtika is hundred times more meritorious than a horse sacrifice. He should fashion a hundred lamps, and should give them (to a brāhmaṇa) after filling them with ghee. He goes in aeroplanes resembling the thunderbolt (in strength) to the place where Śaṅkara stays. He, who would present a bull resembling a conch, or a kunda-flower, or the moon, goes to Rudra's world in a car to which bulls are yoked. O king, he who would give a vessel and also sweetened milk mixed with honey, and various eatables, and (he) who would feed (brāhmaṇas) according to his capacity, would, O lord of kings, have all that increased a crore-fold by the efficacy of that sacred place. Having sprinkled the water over (the image of Śiva) and having worshipped Śiva, he would not meet with misfortune by the efficacy of that sacred place. He, who, having reached this holy place, would cast his life, goes, with his soul absolved of all sins, to (the place) where Śiva (dwells). O king, he who enters water (i.e. bathes) at that holy place, goes to Rudra's heaven in a car to which swans are yoked. As long as the moon, the sun, the Himālayas, the great ocean, or the waters of the Ganges (will remain), he is honoured in heaven. O king, he who would observe a fast at that sacred place, is not required to live in the womb (i.e. is not reborn), O lord of kings. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Aṭavītīrtha. O king, a man having bathed there, would obtain half of Indra's seat.

32-34. Thence he should go to Śṛṅgatīrtha which destroys all sins. By merely bathing there he gets the position of Śiva. The confluence of Eraṇḍi and Narmadā is well-known. The holy place there is meritorious and destroys all sins. Being engaged in fasting and always intent upon (reaching) Brahman, he, having bathed there, is free from (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, O lord of kings.

35-42. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the conflu-

ence of Narmadā and the ocean (i.e. where Narmadā flows into the sea). It is well-known as Jamadagni; and Viṣṇu is settled there. Having performed many sacrifices there, Indra became the lord of gods. Having bathed there at the confluence of Narmadā and the ocean, O king, a man gets threefold fruit of a horse-sacrifice. The intimate union with the western ocean is (just) the opening of the gate to salvation. There gods with gandharvas, and sages, siddhas and cāraṇas, worship Vimaleśvara, the lord of gods, thrice (a day). With his soul free from all sins, he is honoured in Rudra's world. There was never a great sacred place like Vimaleśvara, nor will there be any great holy place like Vimaleśvara. Those who after fasting there, see Vimaleśvara, have their souls freed from all sins, and go to Rudra's heaven.

43-44. Then O lord of kings, a man should go to the Keśinītīrtha. He, intent on observing a fast, restrained and with his diet controlled, and fasting for a night is absolved (of the sin) of the murder of a brāhmaṇa by the efficacy of that holy place. (For him) who would see Sāgareśvara, the best holy place, or would remain within a distance of a yojana from it, Śiva is settled in the eddy. There is no doubt that when it is seen, all the holy places are seen. He, being free from all sins, goes there where Rudra dwells.

45-52. Ten crores of holy places exist within the distance between the confluence of Narmadā and Amarakaṇṭaka. O lord of kings, the walking about from the holy place—the pilgrimage, was resorted to by a crore of sages. The pilgrimages were undertaken by men who maintained the sacred fire, who were the divine portions and who had mastered all knowledge. Therefore, all the holy places give him a holy bath, who would devoutly recite and listen to it daily; and Narmadā would always be pleased with him. Rudra would be pleased with him, and so also the great sage Mārkaṇḍeya. A barren woman gets sons; an unfortunate woman (i.e. one who is disliked by her husband) becomes fortunate. A groom obtains a virgin; whosoever desires what, obtains it. No doubt should be raised about it. A brāhmaṇa gets (the knowledge of) the Vedas; a kṣatriya would be victorious; a vaiśya obtains grains, and a śūdra obtains felicity. A fool would obtain knowledge. A man who would

recite this three times a day would not see (i.e. go to) hell and would not go to (i.e. get) an ignominous birth.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The Story of Five Gandharva Maidens

Nārada said:

1-2. O king, I have thus described to you the excellent Narmadātīrtha. Formerly the fire of the drops of the water of Revā destroyed the excessive fear due to the curse of the daughters of gandharvas. A man is liberated by the touch of the drops of the water of Revā.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

3-6. O revered one, wherefrom did the many daughters get a curse? Whose children were they? What were their names and their ages? How did they get free from the fruit of the curse by the contact of the water? Where did they bathe? O lord, tell me all this. The greatness of the Narmadātīrtha would be surprising. It is said to destroy sins even by listening to it. He who utters the word 'Narmadā, Narmadā', gets eternal liberation as long as the moon and stars exist.

7-8. Formerly you told me the excellent importance of Revā. Still, O good one, tell me the story; also about the best livelihood that should be resorted to by the wise. Therefore, O best of brāhmaṇas, I am asking about the excellent importance of Revā. O lord, tell me the history, bright due to the deeds of the maidens.

Nārada said:

9. O best king, listen to the great story infused with righteousness. As the araṇi (i.e. the piece of wood used for kindling sacrificial fire) contains fire, similarly Dharma is produced by Brahmā.

10. (There was) a gandharva by name Śukasaṅgīti. His daughter was Pramohinī. Suśīlā was the daughter of Suśīla. Susvarā was the daughter of Svaravedin. Sutārā was Candrakānta's daughter and Candrikā was that of Suprabha.

11-18. O king, these were the execellent names of those celestial nymphs. All the five maidens were beautiful due to their being in the prime of youth. They always talked among themsellves like sisters. They as it were came out of the moon like the bright moonlight. Their faces were (beautiful) like the moon; they had lovely hair; and were bright like moonlight. They (the damsels) were among gods as moonlight in white lotuses opening at moonrise. They were born with lumps of (i.e. excessive) beauty; they had celestial forms and were charming. The lotuses of their breasts were shooting forth; they looked like the ketakī plants in the spring. They were charming on account of the youth that had arisen like the foliage of a grove of creepers. They were yellowish like gold; their lustre was like gold; they were decorated with golden ornaments. They had put on the garlands of golden campaka (flowers). Their beautiful garments appeared golden. They were proficient in the musical scale, in various melodies, in beating in (playing on) musical instruments, in diversions, and in playing upon flute and lute, as well as in dance accompanied with singing and instrumental music and in the time in music like the middle one and the fast one; also in diversions like (drawing) pictures and arts.

19. The maidens that were like this were infatuated with excellent sports. Fondled by their parents all of them moved in Kubera's abode.

20-24. Once through curiosity, the five maidens—the celestial damsels—getting together in the spring season, collecting mandara flowers from grove after grove, went to the Acchoda lake to propitiate Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī). Taking excellent golden lotuses along with beautiful blue lotuses from that (lake), having bathed on the pavement of lapis lazuli and clear crystal, having put on their garments, they silently fashioned a golden image of Umā with golden and pearl ornaments on an altar. The young girls, having worshipped Gaurī, decorated with sandal (-paste), perfumes and saffron, with excellent lotuses etc. and with various presents, danced to the accompaniment of singing and instru-

mental music. Having resorted to singing with high notes, the fawn-eyed ones then sang, with natural voice and melodies, songs containing beautiful letters (i.e. words) and raised to a high pitch and made melodious by (various) modes.

25-36a. At that time, to the exellent holy place of the Acchoda came for a bath the eldest son of the sage, the abode of (the knowledge of) the Vedas, when the girls were delighted with the shower of emotions, and with their minds full of joy. The young man was (having) boundless handsomeness, had a charming face, and his eyes were large like blooming lotuses. His chest was broad, he had good (i.e. strong) arms, he was very handsome; his complexion was dark; he was like another Cupid. That celibate, with a good (i.e. a large) tuft of hair, shone with his staff as Cupid with his bow. The excellent one had covered himself with dear-skin, he had put on marks (on his body) and had a girdle of the muñja grass resembling gold round his waist. Seeing that brāhmaṇa on the bank of the lake, the girls, full of curiosity, were delighted (and said): "This one will be our guest." Ardently longing to see him they gave up singing and dancing, and were pierced by Cupid with his arrows, as female dear are pierced by a hunter. The five (maidens) were stupefied, confused and said (to one another): "See, see." They mistook the excellent youth for the god of love. Having repeatedly worshipped him with their eyes as with lotuses, the celestial nymphs began deliberation among themselves: "If this is god of love, (then) how can he be without (his spouse) Rati? Or is he the (twin) gods Aśvins, moving in pair? Is he a gandharva, or a kinnara, or a siddha taking up any form he likes? Or is he the son of a sage, or is he the best one among men? Or is he someone whom the Creator has created for us ? As a treasure is fashioned by (their) former deeds for the fortunate, in the same way, Gaurī, with her heart moistened by the billows of the water of compassion, has brought this excellent groom for us. I have chosen him, you have chosen him, similarly this one also has chosen him."

36b-44. O best king, when the five girls were talking like this, the intelligent one who had finished his mid-day rites there, thought: 'Doing what will be meritorious? Gādhi's son, Parāśara and others, and also Kaṇḍu, Devala and other brāhmaṇas, though strong due to their being meditating saints, were easily

deluded by women. It is (indeed) wonderful. The deer of whose mind does not fall when struck with the sharp arrows of the eyes (i.e. glances) of youthful women, shot from the creeper-like brows, by the archer viz. Cupid? As long as a man is not intoxicated by the spirituous liquors of the eyes (i.e. glances) of women, his moral sense dominates. There is in him the fear of the society; he is self-possessed; there is a consideration of the family; there is the strength of penance; men practice tranquility. Women with their charming amorous gestures delude and madden a passionate man. These (maidens are trying to) delude and madden me, who am intent upon guarding my righteousness by means of my own virtues. Passionate men, with their minds deluded, imagining charm (to be present) in the worthless and impure bodies of women, made of flesh, blood, feces and urine, enter (i.e. cohabit with) them. Wise sages of pure hearts have described women to be fearful. As long as these women do not approach me, I shall go home.'

45-47. By the time (i.e. before) the excellent maidens approached him, the brāhmaṇa vanished by the power of Viṣṇu. Seeing the wonderful act of that celibate, the devotee of Viṣṇu, who vanished by the power of magic, the maidens, O king, with their eyes frightened and themselves afraid like young female deer, moving their eyes looked into the ten vacant directions.

The maidens said:

48-58. Clearly he knows magic, or he knows (art of creating) illusion. Though seen (by us) he has (suddenly) vanished.

Thus they talked with one another. Just then only their hearts were pervaded by the fire of separation, as a very beautiful forest would be entirely pervaded by blazing wild fire. "O charming one, give up your magical skill. Present yourself to us quickly. It is not proper for you (to act) in the manner of a fly (falling into the food even) before a morsel (is eaten). Alas! Why were you shown to us? Why were you created by the Creator? We know, you, the cause of great tormentation to us, are self-created. Is it that your heart is cruel? Do you not entertain good intention towards us? O charming one, are you cruel? Are you stealing our minds? Do you not trust us? Are you

testing us? Are you not having affection for us? Are you skilled in deception? Do you possess the skilful knowledge of entering our hearts? But why do you not know the means of getting out? Why are you so much angry with us without our fault? Do you not realise the pain of others or their deception? O lord of our hearts, we are doomed by your disappearance. We shall not live without seeing you, but shall live only with the hope of seeing you. Quickly take us where you have gone. Creator, who has robbed (us) of your sight, has cut off the sprout of our joy. By all means present yourself to us. Take full pity on us. Good people do (wait to) see the end of anything."

59-61a. Crying like this, and waiting (there) for a long time, the maidens then, through fear of their parents, started to go home. Bound by the chains of his affection, and being very much distressed by separation (from him), they somehow mustered courage and went to their respective houses. Having come (home) all of them fell down near their mothers.

61b-74. The mothers asked them: "What is this? Why are you late?" "As we were playing with kinnarīs, we stayed together (with them) at the Acchoda lake; therefore we did not realise (how far) the day (had advanced). O mother(s), on our way we were exhausted; therefore our bodies have suffered. Due to some great confusion we are unable to speak." Speaking like this, the beautiful maidens, concealing the expression of their faces, talked with their mothers, and rolled on the jewelled floor. Some did not make their peacock, kept for pleasure, dance in joy. Others did not teach their parrot out of curiosity. Some other did not fondle her mongoose. Someone else, extremely confused, did not at all play with the cranes. They did not resort to (any) diversion, nor did they rejoice in their houses. They did not properly talk with their relatives, nor did they play on the lute. All the flowers of the desire-yielding tree were like fire to them. They did not drink the sweat honey having the fragrance of mandara flowers. The maidens had their eyes (i.e. eye-sight) fixed on the tips of their noses like female ascetics. They were continuously, but aimlessly, thinking. They had fixed their mind on that best man. For a moment they remained in a cave, covered with moonstones, with a stream (flowing) at its opening. For a moment they stayed at a window, and for a moment in the

house with artificial fountains. For a moment they prepared beds with the leaves of lotus-creepers (growing) in the lakes. They were fanned by their friends with the leaves of lotus-creepers. In this way the excellent maidens passed the night resembling a yuga. Somehow they sustained themselves. They were delirious as if they suffered from fever. In the morning, on seeing the gem of the sky (i.e. the sun), they thought that they were alive. Having informed their own mothers, they went to worship Gaurī. Having bathed according to the proper rite, and again naving worshipped the goddess with flowers and incense, they remained there singing.

75-81. In the meanwhile, that brāhmaṇa also came from his father's hermitage to that Acchoda lake to bathe (there). Seeing that celibate, the maidens were delighted, with their eyes expanded, as the white-lotus plants are joyful (i.e. bloom) on seeing the sun at the end of the night. Those young girls went near the celibate, and they put round him the nooses formed by joining their right and left hands. (They said to him:) "O dear one, yesterday you went (leaving us). Today you cannot go. You have been chosen by us. There can be no doubt about this." The brāhmaṇa who was (caught) in the noose of their arms and who was thus addressed, laughed and said: "You are saying auspicious, favourable words. But that would destroy the vow of me, who am still in the first stage of life (i.e. celibacy) and given to studies. I have not yet reached the other end (i.e. have not completed my studies) in my preceptor's house. Very wise men practise the way of life which is to be practised in a particular stage of life. Therefore, O maidens, I do not think marriage to be the (proper) way of life (for me)."

82-92. Having heard the words of the brāhmaṇa, the excellent maidens who were eager and who made sweet and indistinct sound like the cuckoos in the spring season, said to the brāhmaṇa: "Material welfare (*artha*) is (better) than piety (*dharma*); satisfaction of desires (*kāma*) is (superior) to material welfare. The rise of the fruit of happiness comes from the satisfaction of desires. In this way the wise who have firm convictions, describe it. That kāma (i.e. the satisfaction of desires) is standing before you due to your great righteousness. Resort to it with various enjoyments, since this ground is clean." Hearing these words of them he

spoke to them in serious words : "Your words are (i.e. what you say is) true; but (practising) my vow is essential. I shall go through the right of marriage (only) after I secure my preceptor's permission, not otherwise." Thus addressed, they again said to him : "O handsome one, you are evidently a fool. Excellent women, coming from good families, are a medicine made ready by the intelligence of Brahmā; they are a spell, a ready charm. O sage, they, when they have approached, should be properly; enjoyed by a wise man. If, fortunately a business becomes successful, the wise ones do not ignore it. Since indifference is not fruitful, therefore procrastination is not approved. Nectar should be taken even from poison; gold even from a filthy thing. Excellent knowledge should be obtained even from a mean person, and a gem of woman even from a bad family. (Only) fortunate men obtain maidens who are spotless due to being born in good families, whose hearts are wet with (i.e. full of) love, who talk sweetly, who choose their own grooms, who are beautiful and have a charming youth; and no other men (can obtain such maidens). How incongruous are we, the celestial beauties on one side and you, an ascetic boy on the other! I think the Creator alone is wise since he has done this impossible job (of bringing together two incongruous things). Therefore now you should accept us auspiciously by means of the Gāndharva type of marriage.[1] Otherwise we cannot live."

93-96. Hearing (these) words, the brāhmaṇa, the best among those who known Dharma, then said: "O you fawn-eyed maidens, how should men whose wealth is righteousness, give it up? The group of the four, viz. Dharma (i.e. piety), Artha (i.e. material welfare), Kāma (i.e. satisfaction of desires) and Mokṣa (i.e. liberation) is said to give fruit as (already) told. The opposite of this does not give fruit. Therefore, I who am observing a vow, shall not betake myself to a wife at a wrong time. He who does not know the time of an act (i.e. when the act should be done), does not get the fruit of that act. Since (now) my mind is attached to the consideration of Dharma, therefore, listen, O maidens, I do not desire marriage."

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1. Gāndharva Vivāha : One of the eight forms of marriage. In this form marriage takes place between lovers without seeking prior approval of relatives.

97-103a. Knowing this intention of him, they looked at each other, and let free his hand from their hands. Then Pramohinī seized his feet. Suśīlā and Susvarā seized his arms. Sutārā embraced him and Candrikā kissed (him on) his face. Yet he was unperturbed. Resembling the fire of deluge, and very violent due to rage, the young celibate cursed them: "Since like devils you clung to me, therefore you will be (turned into) devils." "What is this sinful act done to an innocent one through folly? You have done what is disagreeable to one who wants to do good to you. Fie upon you who have put an end to righteousness! We have heard that the happiness of the man who seeks to hurt those who are attached devoted friends, comes to an end in both the worlds. Therefore, you too, due to our curse, quickly be (turned into) a goblin."

103b-108. Speaking like this, the young girls were sighing, being full of anger. Due to mutual agitation, O king, those maidens and that celibate—all of them turned into goblins in that lake. That male goblin and the famale goblins crying fearfully, exhausted the ripening of the deeds they had formerly done. O king, a good or bad deed done formerly gives fruit when its due time (has come) (and) the fruit is unavoidable even for gods like one's own shadow. At various places the fathers and mothers, and brothers also of those young girls cried. Fate is insurmountable. Hereafter the goblins, being extremely unhappy, wandered here and there for food and lived on the bank of the lake.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The Sage Lomaśa Comes to the Help of the Goblins

Nārada said:

1-6. After a long time the magnanimous, best sage Lomaśa who wandered as he liked, came there. Seeing the brāhmaṇa all the goblins living in a group and being overpowered by hunger and desiring to eat him, ran to him. Being burnt by the sharp lustre of Lomaśa, unable to stand before him, they remained

away from him. Then, that brāhmaṇa, who had become a goblin as a result of his former deeds, seeing Lomaśa, saluted him by prostrating himself before him, and putting his folded palms on his head spoke true and pleasant words, O king:

7-12. "O brāhmaṇa, at the time of the rise of great fortune there would be (obtained) the company of the good. Between a man who at all times bathes at the sacred places like the Ganges etc. and the one who keeps company with the good the latter is superior. O brāhmaṇa, company of the great gives seen and unseen fruits, gives (i.e. takes one to) heaven, removes diseases and is said to remove (mental) darkness." Saying so, he told him his former wonderful account. "These are those gandharva-daughters, and I am that son of a brāhmaṇa, O sage. All of us were foolish cursing one another (and turning) into goblins. O best sage, before you we are standing with melancholy faces. By seeing you, we the fools, shall be liberated. Would the mass of darkness cling to the atmosphere when the sun rises?" Hearing these words, Lomaśa, of a great lustre, with his heart tender with compassion, said to the sage's son who was afflicted: "Let the memory of all of you rise suddenly by my favour. Let all of you remain in righteousness, so that your mutual curse would come to an end."

The goblin said:

13. O great sage, tell us (what) righteousness (is), so that we shall be free from sins. This is not the time for delay, since the fire of curse is fierce.

Lomaśa said:

14-27. Let (all the goblins) duly bathe in Revā with me. Revā will free you from the curse. There would be no other expiation. O brāhmaṇa, listen attentively. It is my firm opinion that the sin of men would certainly perish by bathing in Revā. Bath in Revā would burn, as fire burns a heap of cotton, all the sins committed in the (previous) seven existences and the present one also. O goblin, all that sin for which (the wise) do not see an atonement, perishes merely by bathing in Narmadā. Bath in Narmadā causes knowledge. Therefore she gives salvation. All the holy places of the Himālaya remove sins. This

one giving (i.e. taking one to) Indra's heaven is fashioned by the teachers of the Vedas. Revā is said to give the fruits of (i.e. to satisfy) all desires and is the giver of liberation. She destroys sins, she removes sins, she gives the fruits of (i.e. satisfies) all desires. A bath in Narmadā gives (i.e. takes one to) Viṣṇu's heaven and destroys sins. A bath in Yamunā would be excellent for (going to) the Sun's world. A bath in Sarasvatī destroys sin, and gives (i.e. leads one to) Brahmā's heaven. O goblin, (a bath in) Viśālā is said to give a great fruit, and is the wild fire to the fuel of sins and the remover of the act of being conceived in a womb. A bath in Narmadā is said to lead to Viṣṇu's heaven and to liberation. Out of the rivers Sarayū, Gaṇḍakī, Sindhu, Candrabhāgā, Kauśikī, Tāpī, Godāvarī, Bhīmā, Payoṣṇī, Kṛṣṇaveṇī, Tuṅgabhadrā and others, Revā is reached (by a man) due to the meritorious deeds done in former existences. O sage's son, a bath there (i.e. in Revā) gives absence of rebirth. Gods, residing in heaven, always sing (i.e. say): "When shall we see Revā, bathing in which (river) men do not experience pangs of (living in) the womb, and remain near Viṣṇu?" Those men who, having many coatings of sins (i.e. who have committed many sins), everyday bathe here in the pure water of Revā, do not sink in hells due to their religious merit, (but) they well (i.e. comfortably) move in heaven like gods.

28. O goblin, formerly the creator weighed Revā against severe vows, acts of charity, penances, and sacrifices, and Revā, that accomplishes salvation quickly, was (i.e. proved) superior to them.

Nārada said:

29. Hearing those words of that Lomaśa, all the goblins quickly went with him to bathe in Revā.

30-34. Then fortunately breezes, giving (i.e. throwing) drops of water on the bodies of them who had come in contact with the stream (of Revā), arose on the bank of Revā. Due to the touch of the drops of the water of Revā, they were freed from their goblinhood. Being instantly endowed with divine bodies, they extolled Narmadā. Then, as told by Lomaśa, the brāhmaṇa happily married those daughters of gandharvas on the bank of Narmadā. Bathing there, drinking (the water of Narmadā)

and plunging into (Narmadā) they stayed there for a long time. Having worshipped Narmadā at this spot, they went to Viṣṇu's heaven. O king, I have thus told you the very auspicious account of Narmadā, which is highly meritorious and which removes sins merely by hearing it.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

Piṅgatīrtha, Narmadā, Dvārāvatī, Timi etc.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Now tell me about other holy places described by Vasiṣṭha, on hearing about which sins perish, O Nārada.

Nārada said :

2-6a. O king, now hear about the holy places described by Vasiṣṭha. A self-restrained man, with his senses controlled, obtains (the fruit of) the Agniṣṭoma sacrifice on reaching the southern sea and gets into an aeroplane. A restrained man, having controlled his diet, having reached Carmaṇvatī, and being allowed by Rantideva, would obtain the fruit of (having performed) the Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. Then, O righteous one, he should go to Arbuda (i.e. mountain Abu), the son of Himālaya, where, O Yudhiṣṭhira, there was formerly a fissure in the earth. There is the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha, well-known in the three worlds. Having lived there for a night, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows (to a brāhmaṇa).

6b-9. O king, a restrained man, having bathed at Piṅgatīrtha, would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a hundred tawny cows (to a brāhmaṇa). Thence he should go to (the holy place) called Prabhāsa which is well-known in the world, O pious one; there Fire himself is always present. O hero, Fire, with Wind as his charioteer, is the mouth of the deities. A man, being pure and having controlled his mind, gets on bathing there the fruit of the Agniṣṭoma[1] and the Atirātra (sacrifices).

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1. Agniṣṭoma: Name of a protracted sacrificial rite extending over several days in spring and forming an essential part of the Jyotiṣṭoma sacrifice.
Atirātra : An optional part of Jyotiṣṭoma sacrifice.

10-12. Going from there to the confluence of Sarasvatī and the ocean, he, having obtained the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows, is honoured in heaven. O best among the Bharatas, always shining like fire by means of his lustre, he, with his mind controlled, should bathe in the holy place of the king of waters; and living there for three nights, he should offer oblations to the deities in the form of the manes. He shines like Soma, and obtains (the fruit of) a horse-sacrifice.

13-14a. O best among the Bharatas, O Yudhiṣṭhira, thence he should go to the sacred place called Varadāna where Durvāsas granted a boon to Viṣṇu. A man having bathed at Varadāna, gets the fruit of (having donated) a thousond cows (to a brāhmaṇa).

14b. Then being restrained and controlled in diet, he should go to Dvārāvatī.

15. A man having bathed at Piṇḍāraka would obtain much gold.

16-20. O you who restrain your enemies, at that holy place, O great king, even now coins marked with lotuses are seen. That is a wonder. O you descendant of Kuru, lotuses marked with tridents are seen. O best among the Bharatas, Mahādeva also dwells there. O you descendant of Bharata, having reached the confluence of the ocean and Sindhu, and having, with a controlled mind, bathed there, and offered oblations to manes, gods and sages, he obtains, shining with his own lustre, Varuṇa's heaven. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the wise say that having worshipped god Śaṅkukarṇeśvara, he gets ten times the merit obtained by (the performance of) a horse sacrifice.

21-25. Turning to the right, O best among the Bharatas, O best among the Kurus, he should go to the holy place, well known in the three worlds, named Timi which frees (one) from all sins and where gods like Śakra and others worship Maheśvara. A man having bathed there and having worshipped Rudra, surrounded by hosts of gods, is freed from the sins committed from his birth. O best among men, here is Timi, praised by all gods. O best among men, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of (having performed) a horse sacrifice. O very wise one, formerly Viṣṇu conquered there Diti's son and, O king, made it pure by killing the nuisance (i.e. demons) to gods.

26-28. Thence, O you pious one, he should go to Vasudhārā praised (by all); by just going there, he would obtain the fruit of (having performed) a horse sacrifice. A man having bathed there and with his mind controlled, should, O best among the Kurus, offer oblations to manes and gods. He is honoured in Viṣṇu's heaven. O best among the Bharatas there is also a great holy place of the Vasus. Having bathed there, and drunk (water from the place) a man is liked by the Vasus.

29. (Then there is) a holy place known as Sindhutama which destroys all sins. O best man, having bathed there (a man) would get much gold.

30-31. Being pure and with his mind controlled, he of good acts and free from passion, obtains (i.e. goes to) Brahmā's world, on reaching Brahmatuṅga. For the maidens the holy place of Śakra is resorted to by siddhas. Having bathed there, O best of men, he would obtain (i.e. go to) Indra's heaven.

32-33. There only is the holy place of (i.e. sacred to) Reṇukā. A brāhmaṇa having bathed there would be pure like the moon. Then, being restrained and having controlled his food he, after going to Pañcanada, obtains (i.e. performs) the five sacrifices which have been described in a sequence.

34-38. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the best place of (i.e. sacred to) Bhīma. Having bathed there a man does not go into a womb (i.e. is not reborn). He would be the son of a goddess. There is Kuṇḍalavigraha. (There) he would get the great fruit of (having donated) a hundred thousand cows. Having reached Girikuñja, well-known in the three worlds, and having saluted the Grandsire (there), he would obtain the fruit (of having given away) a thousand cows (to a brāhmaṇa). O righteous one, from there he should go to the excellent holy place (called) Vimala, where even now golden and silver fish are seen. O best of men, having bathed there, he would obtain the fruit of (having performed) a Vājapeya sacrifice; and with his soul purified of all sins he would get the highest position.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

Vitastā, Malada, Maṇimanta, Brahmavālaka etc.

Nārada said :

1-3. O descendant of Bharata, a man after having reached Vitastā, and after having offered oblations to the manes and deities, gets the fruit of (having performed) a Vājapeya sacrifice. In Kāśmīra itself is the abode of Nāga and also of Takṣaka known as Vitastā and removing all sins. A man having bathed there would indeed obtain the fruit of (having performed) a Vājapeya sacrifice. Being free from all sins, he would go to the highest position.

4-6. Thence he should go to Malada which is well-known in the three worlds. At the time of the last evening prayer, O king, he should after having duly bathed offer an oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled together[1] to fire according to his capacity. The wise say that offerings made to the manes is inexhaustible. An offering of the oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled together to Fire is superior to (the donation of) a thousand cows, or a hundred Rājasūya sacrifices or a thousand horse sacrifices.

7-8. Returning from there, O lord of kings, he should enter the abode of Rudra. Having gone to Mahādeva, he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. O king, a controlled and calm man having reached Maṇimanta and having stayed there for a night, would get the fruit of an Angiṣṭoma sacrifice.

9-11. Thence O best of kings, he should go to Devikā well-known in the world, where the progeny of brāhmaṇas is heard (to exist), O best of the Bharatas, and where Śiva's abode is known in the three worlds. A man having bathed at Devikā and having worshipped Maheśvara and having offered presents (to deities) according to his capacity, gets the fruit of a sacrifice rich in all desired objects.

12-14. There is Rudra's holy place called Kāmākhya liked by gods and sages. O descendant of Bharata, having bathed there a man quickly gets liberation. Then going to Yājana and also to Brahmavālaka and having bathed at Puṣpanyāsa, he would

1. Caru : An oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled for presentation to gods or manes.

not be worried about death. The pious Devikā liked by gods and sages is said to be half a yojana wide and five yojanas in length.

15-17a. Then O righteous one, he should, according to the order, go to Dīrghasatra where gods like Brahmā, siddhas, great sages, getting initiated and controlled in vows, resort to a prolonged sacrificial session. O lord of kings, O you who control your enemies, by just going there a man obtains the fruit of Rājasūya and horse sacrifice.

17b-20a. Then restrained and with his diet controlled he should go to Vinaśana, where Sarasvatī concealed under the slope of Meru goes (i.e. flows). She is seen at Camasa, Śivodbheda and at Nāgodbheda. He would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma sacrifice on bathing at Camasodbheda; a man having bathed at Śivodbheda would get the fruit of (having offered) a thousand cows. A man bathing at Nāgodbheda would obtain (i.e. go to) the world of Nāgas.

20b-24. Then O descendant of Bharata, O lord of kings, he should reach the excellent holy place Śaśayāna where Puṣkara is hidden in the form of a hare. They, O glorious one, O best of Bharatas, every year live there on the full moon day of Kārtika and bathe in Sarasvatī. O best among men, having bathed there he always shines like Śiva. O best among the Bharatas, he would obtain the fruit of (having offered) a thousand cows. O descendant of Kuru, having reached Kumārakoṭi and being controlled he engaged in worshipping gods, would bathe there. He obtains a myriad of cows and would liberate his own family.

25-31. Then being calm, O pious one, he should go to Rudrakoṭi, where, O great king, a crore sages were brought together. Overcome with rain they, desiring to see the god, (said:) "I shall see Śiva first, I shall see Śiva first." Thus, O king, the sages started, O descendant of Bharata. Then, O king, the lord of the meditating saints, having resorted to deep meditation, created, for pacifying the distress of the pure sages, a crore Rudras who stood before the sages. They separately (i.e. each one of them) thought: 'I have seen Śiva first.' Mahādeva was pleased due to the great devotion of the sages of strong lustre and gave them a boon: "From today righteousness in you will increase." O best among man, a man having bathed there at Rudrakoṭi and (thus

being) pure, obtains (the fruit of) Aśvamedha and would liberate his family.

32-34. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the confluence well-known in the world. He should worship the very meritorious Viṣṇu on (the bank of) Sarasvatī where gods like Brahmā, sages, siddhas and cāraṇas go on the fourteenth day of the bright half of Caitra. Having bathed there, O best of men, a man would obtain much gold. With his soul purified of all sins he goes to Śiva's heaven. He would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows if he dies there where the sacrificial sessions of the sages were accomplished.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

Kurukṣetra, Pāriplava, Śalvikinī, Koṭitīrtha etc.

Nārada said:

1-6. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to Kurukṣetra praised (by all). All creatures who have gone there have been freed from their sins. He, who always says "I shall go to Kurukṣetra, I shall stay at Kurukṣetra", is absolved of all sins. O king, a wise man should live there for a month, to which very meritorious (Brahmakṣetra) gods like Brahmā, brāhmaṇic sages, cāraṇas, gandharvas, celestial nymphs, yakṣas and pannagas go, O descendant of Bharata. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the sins of him who even mentally longs for Kurukṣetra, perish, and he goes to Brahmā's heaven. O you, who are perpetuating the Kuru family, a man going to Kurukṣetra with faith, obtains the fruit of Vājapeya and Aśvamedha sacrifices.

7. Then he (should go) to the very powerful doorkeeper Mattakarṇa, O king. Having just saluted him, he would get the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows (to a brāhmaṇa).

8-9. Thence, O pious one, he should go the excellent place of Viṣṇu, where, O lord of kings, Viṣṇu is always present. Having bathed there and having seen Viṣṇu, the origin of the three worlds, he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

10-13a. Thence a man should go to the holy place (called) Pāriplava which is well-known in the three worlds. (By going there) he obtains (the fruit of) Āgniṣṭoma and Atirātra sacrifices. A man would obtain the fruit (of the gift) of a thousand cows by reaching (this) holy place on the earth. Thence O king, a man visiting holy places, should go to (the holy place) called Śālvikinī. Having bathed at Daśāśvamedhika he obtains the same fruit. Having reached Sarpanīvi, the best holy place of nāgas, he obtains (the fruit of) an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice, and goes to the world of nāgas.

13b-15. Then O pious one, he should go to the doorkeeper Atarṇaka. Having stayed there for a night, he would obtain the fruit (of donation) of a thousand cows. Then, being controlled and having his diet restrained, he, having gone to Pañcanada and having bathed at Koṭitīrtha, would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. Having visited the Aśvinī-tīrtha, he is born handsome.

16-19. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the best sacred place Varāha where formerly Viṣṇu dwelt in the form of a boar. O best of men, having stayed there he would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma. Then O lord of kings, he should go to the Soma-tīrtha at Ujjayinī. Having bathed (there), a man obtains the fruit of a Rājasūya (sacrifice). A man, having bathed at Ekahaṁsa, would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. Having reached Kṛtaśauca, the pilgrim would obtain (the fruit of) Puṇḍarīka, and would become one who has purified himself.

20-24a. Then he (should go) to the holy place called Muñjāvaṭa of the wise Mahādeva. Having lived there for a night he would obtain the position of the head of Śiva's attendants. Then, O great king, having bathed and gone to Jayā well-known in the world, he would obtain all desired objects. O best among Bharatas, that is a well-known gate to Kurukṣetra. The pilgrim turning to the right, and having returned, having bathed at Saṁsmṛta of the Puṣkaras, should worship the deities in the form of manes. (Paraśu-) Rāma, the noble son of Jamadagni, invoked them (here) only. O king, the man would have accomplished his object, and would obtain (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice.

24b-38a. O king, thence the pilgrim should go to Rāma-hrada where, O lord of kings, Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma), of a

blazing lustre having powerfully and speedily expelled the kṣatriyas, resorted to the five deep lakes after filling them with blood. This is what we have heard, O best among men. He offered oblations to his forefathers, and also his great grandsires. Then, O king, the forefathers, being pleased, said to Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma): "O Rāma, Bhārgava, we are highly pleased with you by your devotion to your forefathers and your valour. Well-being to you. Ask for a boon. O you highly intelligent one, what do you desire?" O lord of kings, that Rāma, best among speakers, who was thus addressed (by his forefathers), said, with the palms of his hands joined, (these) words to the forefathers who remained in the sky: "If you are pleased with me, if you favour me, then I desire the increase in my penance; and by your lustre I may be freed from the sin that I, overcome by anger, (committed by having) destroyed the kṣatriyas, and the lakes which have become sacred to me should be well-known on the earth." Hearing these good words of Rāma (i.e. Paraśurāma), his forefathers, extremely pleased and full of great joy said to him: "Due especially to your devotion to your forefathers, may your penance increase again. You are freed from the sin that you, overcome by anger, killed the kṣatriyas. They were killed due to their own (mis-) deeds. The lakes will undoubtedly be the holy places (named) after you. The manes of him who, after bathing in these lakes, will offer oblations to his manes, will be pleased with him, and will grant him his desired object and eternal (residence) in heaven." O king, the manes of Paraśurāma, being pleased and having granted him such a boon and taking leave of Bhārgava, vanished there only. Thus the lakes are sacred to the noble Bhārgava i.e. Paraśurāma. A man of self-control and good vows, after bathing in the lakes of (i.e. sacred to) Paraśurāma, and worshipping him, would obtain much gold.

38b-40. Then, O you who perpetuate the Kuru family, a pilgrim, having reached Vaṁśamūla, would liberate his family by bathing at Vaṁśamūlaka. O best among Bharatas, having reached Kāyaśodhana, a man who has bathed there, obtains the purity of his body; there is no doubt about it. And with his body purified he goes to pious, excellent worlds.

41-44. O lord of kings, thence a man should go to the holy place rare in the three worlds, where formerly the mighty Viṣṇu

liberated people. O king, having reached (that) holy place (called) Lokoddhāra, well-known in the three worlds, and having bathed there, he liberates his own people. Having reached Śrītīrtha, he obtains excellent wealth. A man being restrained and calm, having reached Kapilātīrtha, and having bathed there and worshipped deities and manes, obtains the fruit of (having donated) a thousand tawny cows (to a brāhmaṇa).

45-46a. Going to Sūryatīrtha and with his mind controlled he should bathe there, and devoutly observing a fast he should worship (his) manes and deities. (By doing so) he obtains the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice and goes to the Sun's world.

46b-47a. A pilgrim who, after reaching Gavāṁtīrtha according to the (proper) order, bathes there, would obtain the fruit of (having presented) a thousand cows.

47b-49. O king, a pilgrim (then), after reaching Gaṅgātīrtha and bathing at the Kanyātīrtha, obtains excellent power. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the doorkeeper (called) Lavarṇaka. O king, having bathed there at the holy place (in the stream of) Sarasvatī as in that of the noble Indra, a man would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

50-55a. Then, O pious king, he should go to (the holy place called) Brahmāvarta. He having bathed at Brahmāvarta would obtain (i.e. go to) Brahmā's heaven. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Sutīrthaka where gods are always present with the manes. Engaged in worshipping manes and deities he should bathe there. (By doing so) he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to the world of manes. Then, O best of Bharatas, going to another holy place in order and having bathed in the sacred places of Kāśīśvara, he, being free from all diseases, is honoured in Brahmā's world. O king, Mātṛtīrtha is just there, having bathed where his progeny increases (in number), and, O king, he would obtain a position in heaven.

55b-61a. Then being controlled and with his diet restrained, he should go to Śītavana. O great king, there is a great holy place which is difficult to be found elsewhere. By merely seeing it and by restraint, O king, he is purified. O descendant of Bharata, having offered his hair at that (holy place), he is purified. Then there is another holy place known as Snātalokārtiha. O

you best among men, O you best of the Bharatas, learned brāhmaṇas, highly devoted to it, having bathed there, obtain the best position (i.e. salvation). O best of Bharatas, at the holy place (called) Svarṇalomāpanayana, best brāhmaṇas cast off their hair after controlling their breath. Then, with their souls purified, O lord of kings, they go to the highest position (i.e. get salvation). O king, having bathed at Daśāśvamedhika (situated) at that holy place only, O tiger (i.e. best) among men, men with their souls purified go to the highest position (i.e. obtain salvation).

61b-67a. O lord of kings, he should go to (the holy place called) Mānuṣa, well known in the world. O king, there a black deer tormented by a hunter with arrows, plunged into that lake and obtained manhood. A man, being restrained and calm, having bathed at the holy place, has his soul purified from all sins, and is honoured in heaven. O king, to the east of (the holy place called) Mānuṣa, at a distance of a krośa (i.e. two miles) there is a well-known river called Āpagā, which is resorted to by siddhas. One who gives there the meal of Śyāmāka rice dedicating it to the deities and manes, obtains a great fruit of his piety. If (only) one brāhmaṇa is fed, a crore brāhmaṇas are fed. Having bathed there and worshipped the deities and also the manes, and having stayed there for a night, one would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

67b-71a. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the best place of Brahmā, known in the world as Brahmānusvara, O descendant of Bharata. O you best among the Bharatas, he who being pure and with his mind controlled, bathes there at the holy pools of the seven sages, and O lord of kings, at Kedāra and at the holy place of the noble Kapila, goes to Brahmā, and with his soul purified of all sins, goes to Brahmā's heaven. Having reached Kapiṣṭhala's (place called) Kedāra, difficult to reach, he, with his sins burnt by penance, acquires (the art of) becoming invisible.

71b-79a. Thence, O lord of kings, a man should go to (the holy place called) Sarvaka, well-known in the world. Having gone to the bull-bannered one (i.e. Śiva) on the fourteenth day of the dark half, he gets all his desired objects and goes to heaven. O descendant of Kuru, there are three crores of holy

places. At the pond there is Rudrakoṭi; in the lakes there is Samantaka. O best of Bharatas, there only is the holy place Ilāspada. Having bathed and worshipped deities and manes there, one does not meet with calamities and obtains the (fruit of) Vājapeya sacrifice. O king, having bathed at Kiṁdāna and also at Kiṁjapa, a man obtains immeasurable (fruit of) gifts and sacrifice. One having faith and his senses under control having bathed at Kalaśī, obtains the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. To the east of Saraka there is an auspicious place known as Rāmajanma, O greatest among Kurus, which is sacred to Nārada. O descendant of Bharata, one who having bathed there casts his life, being permitted by Nārada, obtains worlds difficult to obtain. One should enter (i.e. go to) Puṇḍarīka on the tenth of the bright half (of a month). Having bathed there, O king, he would obtain the fruit of Puṇḍarīka.

79b-85. Thence he should go to Triviṣṭapa, well-known in the three worlds. There is the auspicious river Vaitaraṇī which frees (a man) from sins. Having bathed there and worshipped (Śiva) holding the trident in his hand and having the bull as his banner, and (thus) with his soul purified from all sins, he would go to the highest position (i.e. salvation). Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent Phalakivana. Gods have always resorted to that Phalikivana, and practised penance for many thousand years. One having bathed at Dṛṣatpāna and having offered oblations to the deities, obtains the fruit of Agniṣṭoma and Atirātra sacrifices. O lord of kings, having bathed at the place sacred to all gods, one obtains the fruit of (giving away) a thousand cows. A man having bathed at (the holy place called) Pāṇikhyāta, and having offered oblations to the deities, obtains (the fruit of) Rājasūya, and also goes to the world of sages.

86-87. Thence, O pious one, one should go to (the holy place called) Miśraka which is well-known in the world. O lord of kings, we have heard that the noble Vyāsa has brought together the holy places at that place for brāhmaṇas. One who bathes at Miśraka has well bathed at all holy places.

88-95. Thence being controlled and having his food controlled he should go to Vyāsavana (the grove sacred to Vyāsa). Having bathed at Manojava one would obtain the fruit of (having

donated) a thousand cows. Having gone to Madhuvanī, the place of the goddess, one with purity (of mind) and self-control should worship the deities and the manes. Being allowed by the goddess he would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O descendant of Bharata, he who has bathed at the confluence of Kauśikī and Dṛṣadvatī and has his diet restrained, is absolved of all sins. Then there is the holy place called Vyāsasthalī where Vyāsa tormented by the grief due to (the death of) his son, had decided to end his life, and was again roused to action by gods, O lord of kings. Having gone (i.e. if a man goes) to that place, he would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O lord of men, having reached (the holy) lake of Ṛṇānta and having offered there sesamum of the measure of a prastha (to the manes) he would, after being freed from debts, get a great success. Having bathed at the Veditīrtha, a man would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O king, the two holy places Aha and Sudina are difficult to reach. A man having bathed at them would obtain (i.e., go to) the Sun's heaven.

96-106. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Mṛgadhūma, well-known in the three worlds. Having bathed there at Rudrapada and having worshipped the noble trident-holder (i.e., Śiva), a man would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. A man having bathed at Koṭitīrtha would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. Then having gone to (the holy place called) Vāmanaka which is well-known in the three worlds, and there bathing and having properly worshipped Vāmana, one with his soul purified of all sins, would obtain Viṣṇu's heaven. A man having bathed at Kulampuna purifies his own family. Having gone to the pool of Pavana, the excellent holy place of the Maruts and having bathed there, a man is honoured in the world of Vāyu, O best of men. A man, having bathed at the pool of the immortal ones (i.e., gods), and having worshipped the lord of gods, is honoured in heaven due to the prowess of the gods. O lord of kings, having duly bathed at Śālisūrya of Śālihotra, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows, O best among men. O best among the Bharatas, there is a holy place on (the bank of) the Sarasvatī (called) Śrīkuñja. O king, a man having bathed there, would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma. Then having reached

(i.e., he should go to) Naimiṣakuñja, very difficult to reach. O lord of kings, it is said that sages of the Naimiṣa (forest) with penance as their wealth formerly set upon a pilgrimage and went to Kurukṣetra. Then an arbour was made on (the bank of) the Sarasvatī. It is a great place of the sages, which gives great joy. Having bathed in the arbour, a man would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

Kanyātīrtha, Saptasārasvata, Pṛthūdaka, Sannihiti, etc.

Nārada said :

1-11. O you pious one, then a man should go to the excellent holy place (called) Kanyātīrtha. A man having bathed at Kanyātīrtha would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice). Thence, O best among men, a man should go to the excellent place of Brahmā. Having bathed there a man of a low caste obtains brāhmaṇahood; and a brāhmaṇa, with his soul purified, would go to the highest position. Thence, O best among men, a man should go to the excellent Somatīrtha. Having bathed there, O king, a man would obtain (i.e., go to) Soma's world. Thence, O king, he should go to the holy place (called) Saptasārasvata where (lived) Maṅkaṇaka, a siddha, a brāhmaṇic sage, famous in the world. O king, it is heard that formerly Maṅkaṇaka was injured on his hand by the tip of Kuśa (i.e., darbha). From it vegetable juice flowed. The brāhmaṇic sage of a great penance seeing that vegetable juice and being full of great joy and with his eyes dilated due to amazement, danced. Then, when he danced, all that was immovable and movable, both, being deluded by his lustre, danced. O king, gods like Brahmā, and also sages with penance as their wealth, requested Mahādeva (i.e., Śiva) for the sake of the sage, "O god, please act in such a way that this (sage) would not dance." Then the god seeing the sage dancing with his mind full of joy said, with a desire for the good of the deities, to the sage :

"O pious, great sage, why are you dancing ? O best sage, what is the cause of your joy today ?"

The sage said :

12-24a. O best brāhmaṇa, O brahman, do you not see that from this wound incurred by me, an ascetic following the righteous path, vegetable juice has flowed, seeing which, I, full of great joy, have been dancing ?

Laughing at the sage overwhelmed by emotion the god said: "O brāhmaṇa, I am not amazed. Look at me." O best among men, having said so, Mahādeva, at that time, struck his thumb with the tip of his finger, O sinless one. From his wound ashes resembling snow came out. O king, seeing it, the sage, being ashamed, fell at (Śiva's) feet. (The sage said :) "I do not think there is anything superior to god Rudra. O you trident-holder, you are the refuge of the world (consisting) of the gods and the demons. You have created this universe—the three worlds with the mobile and the immobile. At the end of the yuga all enter you only. Even gods cannot know you. How (then) can I ? O you sinless one, in you are seen all gods like Indra. You always are the all-in-all and you fashion and get fashioned the worlds. Through your grace the gods, having no fear from anywhere, rejoice here." Having praised Mahādeva like this, the sage bowed (before him) and said: "O Mahādeva, by your favour my penance does not perish." Then the god, with his mind pleased, said to the brāhmaṇic sage: "O brāhmaṇa, by my grace may your penance grow thousandfold. O great sage, I shall stay with you in this hermitage. For those who have bathed at (the holy place called) Saptasārasvata, nothing will be difficult to be obtained in this or in the next world. They would go to the world of Sarasvatī. There is no doubt about this."

24b-31a. Having spoken like this Mahādeva disappeared there only. Thence (a man) should go to (the holy place called) Auśanasa well-known in the three worlds, where gods like Brahmā and sages with penance as their wealth (dwell), and where the revered Kārtikeya lived for doing good (to his devotees), O Bhārgava. (Then there is) the holy place called Kapālamocana which destroys all sins. O best of men, having bathed

there a man is freed from all sins. Thence he should go to Agnitīrtha. O best of Bharatas, having bathed there he obtains (i.e., goes to) Agni's world, and would liberate his family. O best among Bharatas, the tīrtha of (i.e., sacred to) Viśvāmitra is there only. O great king, having bathed there, he is born in a brāhmaṇa family. With a pure and controlled mind he should go to Brahmayoni. O best of men, having bathed there he goes to Brahmā's heaven and undoubtedly purifies his family up to the seventh (descendant).

31b-40. Then, O lord of kings, he should go to the holy place well-known in the three worlds as Pṛthūdaka and said to be of (i.e., sacred to) Kārtikeya. Engaged in the worship of the deities and manes, he should bathe there. O descendant of Bharata, all the bad deeds done by a man or a woman knowingly or unknowingly through (limited) human intelligence, perish by just bathing there. He (or she) obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice and heaven also. Kurukṣetra is said to be holy. Sarasvatī is said to be (holier) than Kurukṣetra. The holy places are superior to Sarasvatī. Pṛthūdaka is superior to the holy places. He who intent upon muttering (the names of the lord) casts his body at Pṛthutīrtha, the best of all holy places, would not have birth and rebirth. It is sung (praised) by Sanatkumara and by the noble Vyāsa also, and also, O king, it is ordained by the Veda (that a man) should go to Pṛthūdaka. O best of men, there is no auspicious place better than Pṛthūdaka. It is sacred, pure and purifying. There is no doubt about this. Even sinful persons go to heaven after having bathed there, i.e., at Pṛthūdaka. Thus the wise say, O best of men. Just there is a holy place (called) Madhusrava, O best of Bharatas. O king, having bathed there a man would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows.

41-47. Thence, O best among men, he should, according to the order, go to the place of (i.e., sacred to) the goddess, i.e. to the confluence of Sarasvatī and Aruṇā, which is well-known in the world. Having fasted (there) for three nights and having bathed (there), he is absolved of (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Also he sanctifies his family up to the seventh (member). There is no doubt about this. O you who perpetuate the Kuru-family, there only is a holy place called Avakīrṇa, which was formerly fashioned for the sake of brāhmaṇas by Darbhin. By (practising)

vows (and undergoing) thread ceremony, fasting, a twice-born undoubtedly becomes a brāhmaṇa endowed with (i.e., knowing) rites and hymns. It is an ancient observation that a brāhmaṇa who is without any rite or (sacred) hymns would become a brāhmaṇa who has observed vows. Darbhin also brought together the four oceans. O best of men, having bathed there, a man would not have (i.e., meet with) misfortune; and he obtains the fruits of (having donated) four thousand cows.

48-49. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the holy place (called) Śatasahasraka. (A holy place called) Sahasraka is there only. (These) two holy places are well-known in the world. A man having bathed at (these) two (holy places) would obtain the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. A gift (given here) or a fast (observed at these holy places) would be thousandfold (effective).

50-52a. From there, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent (place called) Reṇukātīrtha. Engaged in worshipping manes and deities he should bathe there. With manes and deities he should bathe there. With his soul freed from all sins, he would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. With his anger subdued (i.e., not being excitable) and his senses controlled, he, having (i.e., he who has) bathed at (the holy place called) Vimocana, is completely free from sins born of receiving donations.

52b-58a. Thence, being chaste and with his senses controlled, he should go to Pañcavaṭa. Being endowed with great religious merit, he is honoured in heaven. Here, Sthāṇu (i.e., Śiva) the lord of the meditating saints having the bull for his banner, himself (resides). (Then) there is the holy place which is sacred to Varuṇa called Taijasa shining with its own lustre, where at that (i.e., old) time gods like Brahmā and others and sages with penance as their wealth, consecrated Guha (i.e., Kārtikeya) as the general (of the army of gods). O you perpetuating the Kuru family, to the east of Taijasa is Kurutīrtha. A chaste man who has controlled his senses, has his soul purified of all sins after bathing at Kurutīrtha. Being restrained and with his diet controlled he should thence go to Svargadvāra. He obtains (the fruit of) an Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice) and obtains (i.e., goes to) the world of Brahmā.

58b-62a. Thence, O lord of men, a pilgrim should go to the holy place (called) Anaraka. O king, having bathed there a man would not obtain (i.e., meet with) misfortune. Brahmā himself is always honoured there with gods. O best among men, with those whose origin is the highest Nārāyaṇa, he remains at the Rudravedī, O you who perpetuate the Kuru family. Having approached that goddess, he would not get (i.e., meet with) misfortune. Having gone to Mahādeva, the master of the world and the lord of Umā (who resides) there only, he is freed from all sins.

62b-68a. O you who subdue your enemies, the man having gone to Padmanābha Nārāyaṇa, shines, and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. O lord of men, a man who has simply bathed at the places holy to all deities, gets free from all his miseries and always shines like Śiva. Thence, O king, a pilgrim should go to Asthipura. Having reached (that) purifying holy place, he should offer oblations to the manes and deities. O descendant of Bharata, he obtains the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. There is the (holy place called) Gaṅgāhrada, the pool, O best among the Bharatas. In that pool there are three crores of holy places. O king, a man bathing there is honoured and goes to Brahmā's world. A man having bathed in the river and having worshipped the great god (i.e., Śiva), gets the highest position and would liberate his family also.

68b-69a. Thence he should go to Sthāṇuvaṭa, well-known in the three worlds. Having bathed there and having stayed there for a night, he would obtain (i.e., go to) Rudra's world.

69b-73a. Then he should go to the grove of badarīs, and then to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage, where a man having fasted for three nights, eats badarī (fruits). A man who eats badarī (fruits) for twelve years and he who fasts for three nights are on par, O king. Having reached Indramārga, O king, a pilgrim is honoured in Brahmā's heaven.

73b-76a. Thence, O lord of kings, a man should go to the holy place well-known in the three worlds, where there is the hermitage of Āditya (i.e., the Sun) who, the magnanimous one, is the mass of lustre. A man having bathed there and worshipped the Sun, goes to the Sun's heaven, and would also liberate his

family. O you who perpetuate the Kuru family, a man bathing at the Somatīrtha undoudtedly obtains (i.e., goes to) Soma's world.

76b-80a. O you pious one, O king, a man should thence go to the auspicious, holy place of Dadhīci, which is purifying and which is well-known in the world, where Sarasvatī, the treasure of penance, obtained perfection. Having bathed at that holy place, a man would obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya sacrifice. There is no doubt that he also has a mind (to reach) goddess Sarasvatī. Being controlled and chaste and devoutly observing a fast he should go to Kanyāśrama, and having stayed there for three nights he would obtain a hundred daughters and he goes to Brahmā's world.

80b-85. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the holy place (called) Sannihiti where gods like Brahmā and sages having penance as their treasure, endowed with great merit, gather every month. Having bathed at Sannihiti when the sun is eclipsed by Rāhu (i.e., on the day of solar eclipse), he thereby gets (the fruit of) a hundred horse sacrifices and desired objects eternally. O lord of men, whichever holy places there are on the earth or in the sky, and also wells and brāhmaṇas and auspicious abodes, all those, O king, undoubtedly will come (i.e., come) on the new moon day in every month to Sannihiti, O best among men. (The holy place) is well-known on the earth as Sannihiti because of the presence of holy places (there). Having bathed and drunk (water) there, a man is honoured in heaven.

86-89a. (Now) listen to the meritorious fruit of the Śrāddha that a man performs on a new moon day or when the sun is eclipsed by Rāhu. A man who has just bathed there and who performs a śrāddha (there) obtains the fruit of a thousand horse sacrifices properly performed. There is no doubt that whatever bad deed of (i.e., is done by) a woman or a man, all that perishes merely by bathing (there). He goes to Brahmā's world in a car having lotus-like colour.

89b-91. Then with (the announcement of) his name he should (salute) Macakruka. O best of Bharatas, the pool of Gaṅgā is there only. O you pious one, a man being restrained and calm should bathe there. (Such) a man obtains the fruit of

Rājasūya and Aśvamedha (sacrifices). On the earth Naimiṣa is holy and Puṣkara in the sky.

92-96. In the three worlds Kurukṣetra is distinguished. Even the particles of dust greatly shaken by wind take even a sinful person to the best position (i.e., salvation). Those who live in Kurukṣetra on the northern (bank) of Sarasvatī and to the south of (the holy place called) Sarasvatī, live in heaven. Even by just uttering these words : "I shall go to kurukṣetra; I shall stay at Kurukṣetra", a man is honoured in heaven. O king, auspicious Kurukṣetra resorted to by brāhmaṇic sages, is at Brahmavedī. Those who live there, are not to be grieved over. The five on the boundary of Kurukṣetra—the distance between Taraṇḍa and Kāraṇḍaka, between the pools of (i.e., sacred to) Paraśurāma and Macakruka—are called the Uttaravedi of the Grandsire.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

Dharmatīrtha, Śākambharī, Rathāvartta, etc.

Nārada said :

1-3a. O pious one, thence he should go to the ancient (holy place called) Dharmatīrtha where formerly the illustrious Dharma practised excellent penance. He fashioned that holy place known by his name. O king, a religious and tranquil man having bathed there purifies his family up to the seventh (generation). There is no doubt about it.

3b-4. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the excellent (holy place called) Kalāpavana. Having gone there with a great difficulty and being calm and having bathed there he obtains (the fruit of) an Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice) and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

5-10. Thence, O king, a man should go to Saugandhika grove where gods like Brahmā and sages with penance as their treasure, siddhas, cāraṇas, gandharvas, kinnaras with great serpents (dwell). As soon as he enters the grove, he is free from all sins. From there the very auspicious, excellent river, greatest

among the rivers, i.e., Sarasvatī is known as Plakṣādevī, O king. He should bathe there in the water flowing out from a hillock. Having worshipped the manes and deities there, he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. There is a holy place called Īśānādhyuṣita which is very difficult to reach. It is certain that the water that goes to it from the hillock is six times (more). O best of men, having bathed there, a man gets (the fruit of having donated) a thousand tawny cows and (of) a horse sacrifice. The ancient people have observed this.

11-13a. O best of men, having gone to Sugandhā, Śatakumbha, and Pañcayajña, a man is honoured in heaven, O descendent of Bharata. Then having reached the holy place Triśūlapatra, difficult to reach, he should bathe there and be engaged in worshipping manes and deities. There is no doubt that after casting his body he obtains the headship of the attendants of Śiva.

13b-18. Then he should go to Rājagṛha, the place of the goddess, which is very difficult to reach. She is known as Śākambharī, and is famous in the three worlds. O descendant of Bharata, for a thousand divine years she subsisted on vegetables. The sages, treasures of penance, and the devotees of that goddess, every month went there, O king. O descendant of Bharata, she welcomed them with (i.e., by offering them) vegetables. Therefore she is famous as Śākambharī. Having reached (the holy place of) Śākambharī, he being chaste and tranquil (should) stay there for three nights and being controlled and pure, should eat vegetables. O descendant of Bharata, by the desire of the goddess, the fruit of that is the same as that of duly eating vegetables for twelve years.

19-22. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Suvarṇākhya, well-known in the three worlds, where formerly Kṛṣna propitiated Rudra for his favour and obtained (from him) many boons difficult to be obtained even by gods; and, O descendant of Bharata, was thus told by Tripura's destroyer pleased with him: "O Kṛṣṇa, in the world you will be a dearer soul (i.e., people will love you more than their own soul) and undoubtedly the entire world will be your mouth." O lord of kings, having gone there and having worshipped the bull-bannered god, he

obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and the headship of Śiva's attendants.

23-26. Having stayed there for three nights, a man should go to Umāvatī from there. There is no doubt that he gets the objects desired by his mind. To the southern half of (the holy place of) the goddess, there is (the holy place called) Rathāvartta, O king. Having reached there, O pious one, a man having faith and with his senses controlled goes to the highest position (i.e., salvation) by the grace of Mahādeva. O best of the Bharatas, he should proceed after turning to the right to (the holy place called) Dharā which destroys all sins, O you highly intelligent one. O king, having bathed there, a man is never unhappy.

27-31a. Then, O best of men, having saluted the great mountain, he should go to Gaṅgādvāra, which is undoubtedly equal to the gate to heaven. Being calm he should bathe there at the Koṭitīrtha. (Thereby) he obtains (i.e. reaches) Puṇḍarīka, and would liberate his own family. Having stayed there for a night he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. At Saptagaṅga, Trigaṅga and Śakrāvartta he should duly offer oblations to deities and manes. (By doing this) he is honoured in the world of the meritorious. Then, a man having bathed at Kanakhala and having fasted for three nights obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to heaven.

31b-33. Then a pilgrim should go to (the holy place called) Kapilāvaṭa, O king. A man by staying there for a night obtains the fruit of (having given) a thousand cows. O best among the Kurus, (then there is) the holy place of the magnanimous Kapila, the king of Nāgas. O lord of kings, it is well-known in all the worlds. O king, a man should bathe there at the Nāgatīrtha. (Thereby) he obtains the fruit of (having given) a thousand tawny cows.

34. Thence a man should go to Lalitaka, the excellent holy place of Śantanu. O king, having bathed there a man would not meet with disaster.

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

Kālindītīrtha : *Efficacy of Yamunā*

Nārada said :

1-18. O lord of kings, then a man should go to the excellent (holy place called) Kālindītīrtha. O king, having bathed there one does not meet with misfortune. O best among men, one obtains that fruit (by bathing) in Yamunā which he gets (by bathing) at Puṣkara, Kurukṣetra, Brahmāvartta, Pṛthūdaka, Avimukta, Suvarṇākhya. Those in whose heart there is a great attachment for heavenly pleasures or who desire (long) life, good health, wealth, handsomeness, youth and virtues, should not give up the water of Yamunā. (These things can be had) especially by a bath in Yamunā, O best one. Those who are afraid of hell etc. and those who have a dread of poverty, should with all efforts take a bath in Yamunā. O Yudhiṣṭhira, except the water of Yamunā there is nothing else for (i.e., which is capable of) washing the mud of poverty, sins, misfortune. Deeds done without faith give half (i.e., a partial) fruit. But a bath in Yamunā gives the entire fruit. O king, he who with or without a desire bathes in the water of Yamunā, does not see (i.e., experience) miseries here (i.e., in this world) or in the next world. As the moon wanes and waxes in the two fortnights, in the same way by bathing in Yamunā sin perishes and religious merit increases. As in the ocean various gems are easily obtained, so (long) life, wealth, wife, riches are possible for (i.e. are obtained by) him. As the desire-yielding cow gives the desired object, or as the desire-yielding gem gives whatever is thought of, in the same way a bath in Yamunā gives all (the objects of) desire. In Kṛtayuga penance was great knowledge; in Tretāyuga sacrifice (was important); in Dvāparayuga and Kaliyuga giving (gifts) is (fruitful). (But) Yamunā is always auspicious. O king, for all the castes and for all the stages of life a bath in (the water) of Yamunā indeed showers piety in streams. In this country (called) Bhārata, especially (named) as the land of religious rites, the life of men not bathing in Yamunā is said to be fruitless. As on the new moon day there is no affluence in the orb of the moon in the sky, in the same way no act shines (i.e., is effective)

without a bath in Yamunā. Hari or Keśava (i.e., Viṣṇu) is not so much pleased by means of vows, gifts or penance as he is pleased by means of just a bath in Yamunā. There is no lustre like that of the sun. In the same way there is nothing like a bath in Yamunā. Equally potent are the sacrificial rites. For pleasing Vāsudeva, for removing all sins and for obtaining (i.e., going to) heaven men should bathe in Yamunā.

19-25. What is the use of protecting the very well nourished and strong body which is unstable without having a bath in Yamunā ? The body is a column of bones, a union of sinews, filled with flesh and blood, put together with skin and having a foul smell, full of urine and feces, pervaded with old age, grief and misery, a weak abode of diseases, the source of attachment, transitory, and the resort of all blemishes, having the affliction of the sin of other's obligations (*paropakārapāpārtiparadroha*?), deceiving others, and jealous of others; (it is) greedy, wicked, cruel, ungrateful and momentary also. It is pityless, difficult to be arrested, wicked and defiled by the disorder of the three humours of the body.[1] (It is) impure, tormenting, foul-smelling, and deluded by the three kinds of miseries.[2] It is by nature engaged in impiety; it is full of a hundred thirsts (i.e., desires); it remains at the door of hell in the form of passion, anger and great greed. It is full of worms, ordure, ashes etc., useful in the end (*pariṇāmaguṇāvaham*?). Such a body is useless without a bath in Yamunā.

26-33. Those who are without a bath in Yamunā are born to die only like the bubbles on water or mock eggs among birds. A brāhmaṇa not devoted to Viṣṇu is doomed; a śrāddha without the (offering of) piṇḍas is worthless; a kṣatriya not friendly with a brāhmaṇa is miserable; a family without good practices is condemned. Good conduct is doomed with (i.e., due to) hypocrisy. Penance is worthless due to anger. Unstable knowledge is worthless. Sacred knowledge is doomed due to negligence. A woman is ruined due to her devotion to (someone) else (but her husband). A celibate is ruined by a woman. A sacrifice is worth-

1. Doṣatraya : Disorder of the three humours of the body, viz. wind, bile, and phlegm.

2. Tāpatraya : The three kind of miseries which human beings have to suffer in this world, viz. Ādhyātmika (caused by the mind), Ādhibhautika (caused by animals), and Ādhidaivika (caused by fate).

less when the fire is not blazing. Devotion with deceit is worthless. A maiden having a dependent is doomed. Cooking for oneself (alone) is worthless. Dependence on śūdra's food is useless. The wealth of a miser is doomed. Learning without study is useless. Contradictory advice is lost. A sacred place (used for) livelihood is tormenting. A vow (used for) livelihood is tormenting. A vow (used for) living is worthless. False words are worthless; so also those that are full of slander. A deliberation going to six ears (i.e., to a third person) is doomed. Muttering (the names of a deity) without concentration is worthless. Giving gifts to a brāhmaṇa who is not learned is worthless. Atheists are doomed. All that is done for (obtaining) the other world without faith is worthless.

34-46. O king, as the life of the poor people is worthless in this world, in the same way their life is useless without a bath in Kālindī. All minor and major sins are reduced to ashes by taking a bath in Yamunā, O king. When a man has gone to Yamunā, all sins tremble. Best men, if they bathe in the water of Yamunā, shine like fires. As the moon is free from clouds, they are free from all sins. As fire burns the sacred fuel, in the same way a bath there would burn soft or harsh, small or big sin committed by speech, mind or physical acts. O best king, the sin committed through negligence or deliberately or unknowingly would perish just on bathing in Yamunā. The sinless ones go to heaven, and the greatest sinners become pure. No doubt should be raised about the bath in the water of Yamunā. O king, all are entitled to bathing here and to devotion to Viṣṇu. Goddess Yamunā always destroys the sins of all. This alone is a great hymn; this is a great penance. The excellent bath in Yamunā is a great expiation. Men have a mind to bathe in Kālindī (i.e., Yamunā) due to the practice in other (i.e., previous) existencies as, O king, cleverness in mataphysical knowledge is due to a life-long practice. The bath in Yamunā is efficacious in washing the smearing of the mud of the worldly existence. It is (most) purifying among the purifiers and is excellent. O king, those who have bathed there (i.e., in Yamunā) which gives (i.e., satisfies) all desires, enjoy auspicious pleasures resembling the planets like the sun and the moon. Yamunā, when in contact with (i.e.,

flowing by) Mathurā is said to be giving salvation. Kālindī (i.e., Yamunā) increases (a man's) religious merit.

47-51. At other places Yamunā is holy and removes great sins, (but) in contact with Mathurā the deity (i.e., Yamunā) gives (creates in one's mind) devotion for Viṣṇu. If a man full of devotion bathes in Kālindī, he lives near Viṣṇu for a crore of thousand kalpas. (Even) a man devoid of knowledge indeed attains salvation. His manes are pleased; and being pleased they live in heaven for hundreds of kalpas. O king, for men who drink the holy water of Yamunā what is the use of taking a thousand collections of the five products of a cow ? What is also the use of resorting to a crore of thousands of sacred places ? Giving (gifts) and (performing) a sacrifice there would become a crorefold effective.

CHAPTER THIRTY

Hemakuṇḍala and His Two Sons

Nārada said:

1-13. O king, now I shall tell you an old history (i.e., an account). In Kṛtayuga, in the excellent city of Niṣadha, there lived a merchant resembling Kubera and named Hemakuṇḍala. He was of a high descent, of good deeds, a worshipper of deities, brāhmaṇas and fire. He practised agriculture and trade and purchased and sold various (things). He was eagerly engaged in rearing cows, horses and buffaloes etc. He always sold milk, curds, buttermilk, cowdung, grass, wood, fruits, roots, salt, ginger, long pepper, grains, vegetables, oils, garments of various kinds, metals, sugar and molasses. By these and various other means the merchant always earned eight crores of (coins of) gold. Thus he who had great wealth became grey up to his ears. Then thinking in his mind about the transitoriness of the worldly existence, he did acts of piety with (i.e., by spending) the sixth part of that wealth. He fashioned the temple of Viṣṇu and also the abode of Śiva. He got dug a tank, big and resembling an ocean.

He also constructed many wells and lakes in many ways. According to his capacity he also put up the grove of (the trees like) vaṭa, aśvattha, mango, kaṅkola, jambu, nimba etc., and also a charming garden. He gave food and drink from sunrise to sunset. In all the four directions outside the city he set up stalls where travellers could drink water. That religious-minded one, always engaged in giving gifts, gave all (kinds of) presents that were well-known in the Purāṇas. He also underwent an expiation for the sins committed during his life (time). He was always engrossed in worshipping deities and guests.

14-27a. When he was living like this two sons were born to him, O king. Their names were well-known as Śrīkuṇḍala and Vikuṇḍala. Having put the responsibility of (managing the affairs of) the house on their heads (i.e., on their shoulders) he went to a forest for (practising) penance. Having propitiated there that great god, the lord who grants boons, he with his body afflicted with penance and with his mind always set upon Vāsudeva (i.e., Viṣṇu), reached Viṣṇu's heaven, reaching which a man does not regret. O king, both his sons were full of great pride, young, handsome, proud of their wealth. Their character was bad; they were addicted to bad habits; they did not observe religious rites; they did not obey the words of their mother and (other) elderly persons. They had gone astray; they were wicked; they refused (to recognize) their father's friends. They were engaged in (doing) impious acts; they were wicked; and cohabited with the wives of others. They were engaged in singing and instrumental music, had diversions like playing upon the lute and flute. They were in the company of hundreds of harlots. They sang (songs). (Thus) they then lived. They were surrounded by flatterers. They were skilful (in enjoying) with beautiful women. They put on good dresses; they wore charming garments; they were adorned with pleasing sandal (-paste). They put on fragrant garlands, and the marks of musk. They richly adorned themselves with various ornaments. They put on pearl-necklaces. Here and there they sported with hosts af elephants, horses and chariots. They indulged in drinking wine; they were infatuated by sexual union with the wives of others. They wasted their father's money. They gave (i.e., squandered) a lakh (of coins). Always intent upon enjoyment of pleasures they remained in their own house. In this way they used

that wealth by spending it in improper ways. They gave that wealth to unworthy recipients (like) harlots, rogues, actors, wrestlers, singers and bards, like seed sown in a saline land. They did not give it to worthy recipients, nor did they offer it into the mouth of a brāhmaṇa. They did not worship Viṣṇu, the sustainer of the creatures, destroying all sins.

27b-35. The wealth of both of them was soon exhausted. Then they became very unhappy and were reduced to great poverty. They were lamenting; they were perplexed; they were oppressed with hunger, affliction and grief. When they remained in home, there was nothing that they (could) eat. Due to want of wealth, they, not trusted by their kinsmen, relatives, servants and dependents in that city, were deserted. O king, then they started stealing (things) in that city. Afraid of the king and the people, they then went out of their city. Troubled by all they lived in a forest. The two fools always killed with sharp arrows rubbed with poison many birds, boars, deer and rohita (a species of deer), hares, porcupines, iguanas, and many other beasts of prey. The two very strong ones always enjoyed in the company of bhilas. O you subduer of your enemies, thus they ate fleshy food, forbidden food. Some time one reached a mountain; the other one went to a forest. The elder one was killed by a tiger; the younger one was bitten by a snake. Thus, O king, one day the most sinful ones died.

36-41. Then they were bound by the wicked messengers of Yama and were taken to Yama's abode. Going there, all the messengers spoke (about) both of them to Yama: "O Dharmarāja, these two men have been brought here by your order. Give orders to (us) your servants. (Please) be favourable (and tell us) what we should do." Having spoken to Citragupta, Yama then spoke to the messengers: "O brave ones, one should be taken to the hell and tortured. The other one should be placed in heaven where there are excellent enjoyments." Having heard that order of Yama, the prompt messengers threw the elder one into the terrible Raurava (hell), O king. A certain excellent messenger among them said (these) sweet words: "O Vikuṇḍala, come with me. I shall give you (i.e., lead you to) heaven. Enjoy (there) very divine pleasures which you have earned by means of your deeds."

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

Vikuṇḍalā's Dialogue with the Devadūta

Nārada said:

1. Then he (i.e., Vikuṇḍala) pleased in his mind, entertaining a doubt in his heart, and very much amazed and thinking in his mind (i.e., to himself), asked the messenger on the way (to heaven): "For what reason am I having (this) fruit?"

Vikuṇḍala said:

2. O best messenger, I am asking you (to clarify) an important doubt. We two were born in the same family. Also we have done similar deeds.

3-4. We equally met with a miserable death, and also saw Yama in the same way. How is it that my elder brother who did the same deeds as I, was thrown in hell? And how did I obtain heaven? (Please) remove (this) doubt of mine. O divine messenger, I see no reason why I should be in heaven.

The divine messenger said:

5-9. Mother, father, son, wife, sister, brother are relative to one's birth and for the enjoyment (of the fruit) of his deeds. They are like a gathering of birds on the same tree. A man always attains the fruit of that act which he wilfully did. I am telling you the truth through affection (for you). Men get the good or bad (fruit of) the acts they have done at different times, O vaiśya. One performs acts and he (alone) obtains its fruit. O vaiśya, someone does not enjoy or suffer for the acts of someone else. Your brother fell into the hell due to his very fierce sins. O pious one, because of your piety you will obtain heaven eternally.

Vikuṇḍala said:

10-11. O messenger, from my childhood, my mind was interested in sinful deeds and not in pious deeds. I have committed wicked deeds in this existence. O divine messenger, I do not know my (i.e., if I have done) good deed. If you know the pious acts that I have done, then be kind and tell them to me.

The divine messenger said:

12-20a. O vaiśya, listen to the religious merit that you have earned. I know it all. You do not know it quite positively. There was a brāhmaṇa (named) Sumitra who was Harimitra's son and who had mastered the Vedas. His auspicious hermitage was on the right bank of Yamunā. O best of vaiśyas, in the forest you formed friendship with him; and due to his contact, you bathed for two Māgha months in the auspicious water of Yamunā which removes all sins. O lord of vaiśyas, by bathing for one month at that holy place named Pāpapraṇāśana which is well-known in the world, you were freed from all your sins. Due to the merit (collected by bathing) during the second month of Māgha you obtained heaven, O sinless one. Due to the efficacy of that religious merit always rejoice in the heaven. In the hells your brother (will suffer from) great tortures. He would be cut off with blades of swords; he would be rent with hammers; he would be pounded on slabs, and roasted in burning charcoals.

Hearing the words of the messenger and being afflicted by his brother's distress, he with his whole body covered with bristling hair and being miserable and endowed with modesty said sweet and clever words to the divine messenger:

20b-22. "O good one, friendship with the good even (over the distance) of seven steps gives good fruit. Realising (our) friendship, please oblige me. I, therefore, desire to hear (everything from you). I look upon you as omniscient. Be pleased and tell me by (doing) which deed men do not see Yama's world, and by (doing) which they go to hell."

The divine messenger said:

23-24. O vaiśya, you have asked well. Now your sins have perished. In pure hearts of men a thought for (obtaining) bliss, for final emancipation is produced. Though, due to my being in the service of someone else I have no time (to explain these things), yet through my affection for you I shall explain them according to my intellectual capacity.

25-29. Those (who) never harm others by (physical) deeds, by thought and speech, in whatever condition they may be, do not go to Yama's abode. Men who harm (other) creatures do

not go to heaven even by (i.e., in spite of) their (reciting) Vedas, (giving) gifts, (practising) austerities or (performing) sacrifices. Harmlessness is (a) great (form of) piety. Harmlessness alone is a great penance. Harmlessness is a great gift. This is what the sages always say. Those men who are kind look upon mosquitoes, creeping animals, gad-flies, lice and men as on themselves. These men do not (get roasted) in heated charcoals, are not (fixed) on iron-stakes, are not stupefied, are not (thrown into) the river of corpses, do not meet with misery (imposed) by Yama.

30-34. Those who kill beings moving in water or on the ground here (i.e., on the earth) for their livelihood, get bound by Yama's cord and come to a miserable state. There they eat dog's flesh, drink pus and blood, and bitten by insects with their mouths (turned) down sink in the mud of marrow. Eating one another they live there for many kalpas. Having gone to (i.e., been born in) the species of insects, they for a long time become immobile. Then the cruel ones go to (i.e., are born in) hundreds of species of birds. Then they are born blind, or squint-eyed, deformed or lame. They are born poor, or bereft of a limb and such men kill (other) creatures.

35-41. Therefore, O vaiśya, a pious man longing for happiness in both the worlds—this one and the other one—should not do it (i.e., harm others) by means of physical (deeds) or thoughts or by words. Those who harm creatures do not obtain happiness in both the worlds. Those who do not harm creatures are afraid of nothing. As rivers flowing in a crooked way or straight enter the ocean, similarly all pious acts thoroughly enter harmlessness. O best of vaiśyas, he who has granted fearlessness to beings, has bathed at all holy places and is prepared for a sacrifice. O vaiśya, those who in this world follow the injunctions of the sacred texts, mixing up what is pious and what is impious, do not go to Yama's abode. A celibate, a householder, a hermit and an ascetic engaged in their own duties—all they live in heaven. All men of all castes and stages of life, with their senses controlled and behaving as (already) told, go eternally to heaven.

42-52a. Those who are engaged in performing sacrifices, digging wells and performing other acts of charity, those who are engaged in (performing) the five sacrifices, and those who are always full of compassion, never see Yama's abode. Those

brāhmaṇas who have turned away from objects of sense, who are competent and are teachers of the Vedas, who are always engaged in worshipping fire, go to heaven. The Sun is the path (destination) of those whose faces are not sad, who are brave (though) surrounded by enemies, who die in battles. O vaiśya, those who cast their life while protecting a helpless woman, a brāhmaṇa who has sought their refuge, do not fall from heaven. O vaiśya, those who always protect the lame, the blind, the young, the old, the sick, the helpless and the poor, always rejoice in heaven. Those who, on seeing a cow plunged in mud or a brāhmaṇa sinking in disease, emancipate them, get the world of those who perform the horse sacrifice. Those (men) who give a morsel (of grass) to a cow, who always nurse cows, who do not mount upon a cow's back, live in heaven. Those men who have just made (i.e., dug) a ditch where (from) a cow (having drunk water) is free from thirst, go (straight) to heaven without even seeing Yama's world. Those brāhmaṇas who are always engaged in worshipping fire, deities, preceptors and brāhmaṇas, go to heaven. There is no end to piety (when) wells, tanks, lakes etc. (are constructed and) where animals living on land or in water drink (water) as they like. And even the wise describe him as one who is always intent upon giving gifts.

52b-59a. O best among vaiśyas, as the creatures drink profuse water, he (gets) eternal heaven (i.e., secures an eternal place in heaven) due to his belief in piety. Water is the (very) life of beings, and vitality depends upon water. Even those men who are sinners, are purified by taking a bath everyday. O vaiśya, a bath in the morning would remove external and internal impurity. A man, with his sins removed by bathing in the morning, would not go to hell. That man who eats without bathing is always an eater of filth. The manes and deities turn away from the man who does not bathe. A man without a bath is a sinner; a man without a bath is impure. A man who does not bathe suffers in hell and is born among male insects etc. Those again who bathe in a stream on a parvan day, never go to hell, nor are they born in mean species. Bad dreams and vicious thoughts always become fruitless in the case of men who purify themselves by taking a bath in the morning, O best among the vaiśyas.

59b-62. Men, by offering sesamum seeds or vessels full of sesamum seeds or sesamum seeds (of the measure) of a prastha, never go to the land of the lord of the dead (i.e., Yama). O Vikuṇḍala, having given land, gold, a cow and the sixteen (types of) gifts and having (as a result of these gifts) gone (to heaven), men do not return from heaven. A wise man, having bathed on auspicious days and on Vyatīpāta and Saṁkrama (days), and having given something (on these) days never sinks in disaster. Donors never tread on the fearful hellish path. In this world they are not born in a poor family.

63-68. A man who is truthful, who always observes a vow of silence, who speaks agreeably, who is not given to anger, who is of a good conduct, who does not talk much, who is free from jealousy, who is always full of generosity, who is always full of pity for beings, who always preserves (i.e., keeps to himself) the weak points of others, who talks (only) about the virtues of others, who even mentally does not snatch the wealth, even of the measure of a blade of grass, of others—all these, O best of vaiśyas, do not experience the agony of hell. A man who blames others and who is heretical, is worse than even sinners. He is cooked in the hell till the destruction of the beings (i.e., till the deluge). A man who speaks harsh words, should be looked upon as having come from hell. There is no doubt, O best among the vaiśyas, that such a man meets with misery. An ungrateful man does not have expiation by (visiting) holy places or (practising) austerities. The man suffers from a terrible agony in hell for a long time.

69-71. That man who having controlled his senses and diet bathes at the holy places which are there on the earth, does not go to Yama's abode. A man should not commit a sin at a holy place and should not earn his livelihood at a holy place. Acceptance of gifts at a holy place should be renounced (i.e., gifts should not be accepted at a holy place). So also giving up one's religion for the sake of material gain should be avoided at a holy place. A sin committed at a holy place, also gifts received at a holy place do not give enjoyment. All this does not give enjoyment at a holy place. Why should one go to hell (by doing these things at a holy place)?

72-77. A man who has once (only) bathed in Gaṅgā, and is purified by the water of Gaṅgā, does not go to hell, even though he has committed a heap of sins. We have heard that vows, gifts, penance, sacrifices and other pious acts are not equal to the bath with the drops of the water of Gaṅgā. O vaiśya, that mean man who says that Gaṅgā is like other holy places, goes to a great, terrible hell. The element of the water (of Gaṅgā) oozes piety; it has dropped from the feet of Viṣṇu. That water of Gaṅgā which is held by Śiva on his head, is Brahman itself which is qualityless and which is beyond Prakṛti. There is no doubt about this. What would equal it within the range of the universe? A man who would say 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā' even at a distance of hundreds of yojanas, does not go to hell. What can be equal to her? The act giving (i.e., taking one to) hell cannot be instantly burnt by any other (means than the water of Gaṅgā).

78. O vaiśya, that man who though fit to accept gift does not accept it, shines in the form of a star in the sky.

79 ab. Those who take out a cow from mud, who take care of the sick, and who die in a cattleshed, (become) stars in the sky.

79c-83. Those who are wholly devoted to prāṇāyāma (i.e., restraining their breath) during the mental recitation of the names of a deity, get their sins destroyed, even though they are sinners, by them (i.e., prāṇāyāmas) only, and do not see Yama's world. O vaiśya, the sixteen prāṇāyāmas evidently purify even the killer of a brāhmaṇa when practised day after day. Prāṇāyāma is equal to austerities that are practised or vows and restraints that are observed or to a thousand cows given as a gift. Prāṇāyāma is equal to (the fruit of) a drop of water taken on the tip of a Kuśa, which a man would drink month after month for a full hundred years. A man reduces to ashes within a moment all the sin which is great or small by means of prāṇāyāma.

84-86. O best of men, those excellent men who look upon another's wife as their mother, never go to (i.e., experience) agony of (i.e., given by) Yama. O vaiśya, he who does not enjoy another's wife even mentally, is with the two worlds (i.e., enjoys both of them). He has supported the earth. Therefore,

those who are endowed with piety, should give up enjoying another's wife. (Enjoying) another's wife leads to twentyone hells.[1]

87. O best of the vaiśyas, those in whose minds desire for (enjoying) other's wives does not arise go to the world of gods, and not to Yama.

88. He who is not conquered by anger, (even though) causes of anger are present, must be looked upon as one who has conquered heaven and as a wrathless man on the earth.

89-90. A son who adores his mother and father like deities (even) before they have reached old age does not go to Yama. O best of vaiśyas, men who adore their preceptor with greater devotion than their father, become guests (i.e., are honoured as guests) in Brahmā's world.

91-92. And here women are blessed who guard their character. By spoiling their character women go to the very terrible world of Yama. By avoiding the company of the wicked women should always preserve their character; for, O vaiśya, there is no doubt that by means of (the preservation of) their character women get (i.e., reach) the best heaven.

93. Misery is enjoined for him who performs a śūdra's domestic sacrifice and does what is prohibited; and he obtains a position in hell.

94-97. Those, who ponder over sacred texts, who are engrossed in Vedic studies, who narrate and recite Purāṇas, who expound the smṛtis (i.e., codes of law), who propound the laws of good conduct, who are adept in the Vedāntas (i.e., the Upaniṣads), have sustained this world. With their sins destroyed by the virtue of that particular study, all of them go to Brahmā's world where there is no delusion. Even Vedas adore him who gives knowledge arising out of the sacred Vedic texts to an ignorant person, and (who therefore) cuts off the bond of mundane existence.

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1. Narakān Ekaviṁśati—The twentyone hells according to the *Manusmṛti* (IV. 88-90) are as follows :

Tāmisra, Andhatāmisra, Mahāraurava, Raurava, Kālasūtra, Mahānaraka, Saṁjīvana, Mahāvīci, Tapana, Sampratāpana, Saṁhāta, Sakākola, Kuḍmala, Pratimūrtika, Lohaśaṅku, Ṛjīṣa, Panthāna, Śālmalī, Vaitaraṇī, Asipatravana, Lohadāraka.

98-119. O best vaiśya, listen to this wonderful secret which is approved by Dharmarāja and which gives nectar to all the worlds. The devotees of Viṣṇu do not see Yama or Yama's world or beings of a horrible appearance. I have told the truth, (and) the truth (only). The brother of Yamunā (i.e., Yama) has always and repeatedly told us: "You have to spare the devotees of Viṣṇu; they should not come within my power. Those beings who (even) once (or) occasionally remember Viṣṇu with all the heaps of their sins destroyed, go to the highest position of Viṣṇu. You should also always spare a man who adores Viṣṇu, even though he is of a bad conduct or a sinner who is devoted to good practices. You should also spare the man at whose house a devotee of Viṣṇu eats or those (men) who are in the company of a devotee of Viṣṇu, (since) their sins are destroyed due to his company." O vaiśya, the god holding the (chastising) rod, always instructs us like this. Therefore, the devotees of Viṣṇu never go to the capital city of Yama. O best among the vaiśyas, for crossing the ocean of hell there is no other means than devotion to Viṣṇu for the most sinful persons. O vaiśya, a man should not investigate an outcast who is a devotee of Viṣṇu. A devotee of Viṣṇu, even if he is an outcast, purifies the three worlds. Thus, for fully removing the dirt of sins men should repeat the virtues, acts and names of the lord, since, even the sinner Ajāmila crying 'O son Nārāyaṇa' while dying, obtained salvation. When men gladly worship Viṣṇu, all those (ancestors of them) who have sunk in hell for a long time and the two families (i.e., of the father and of the mother) go to heaven. O vaiśya, those who are servants of a Viṣṇu's devotee and who eat food from a Viṣṇu's devotee, go without being perplexed to the position of (the followers of Viṣṇu), the enjoyers of sacrifices. A man should with effort desire food from a Viṣṇu's devotee for purification from all sins. In its absence he should drink water. (Even) if a man muttering the hymn ('Govinda...') dies anywhere, he does not see Yama, nor do we see him. He should fully recite the hymn consisting of twelve syllables with the mudrās (i.e., particular positions of the fingers) with meditation, with (the name of) the sage, metre and deity, with (i.e., after) initiation and in the proper manner. On seeing the best men who mutter the best hymn consisting of eight syllables, a

killer of a brāhmaṇa would be purified and himself shines like Viṣṇu. Those men, being the possessors of conches and discs (i.e., resembling Viṣṇu), entering Brahma, live in the form of Viṣṇu in the heaven of Viṣṇu. Men having properly worshipped Viṣṇu (residing) in the heart, in the sun, in water or on the altar of the idol, reach Viṣṇu's position. Or, those who desire salvation, should always worship Viṣṇu in a śālagrāma (stone), a gem, or a disc made of steel particles; for, O vaiśya, it is the abode of Viṣṇu, which destroys all sins, which gives all religious merit and which gives salvation to all. He who would worship Viṣṇu on a disc made of the śālagrāma stone, has everyday performed a thousand Rājasūya sacrifices. The Vedāntas (i.e., the Upaniṣads) always look upon Viṣṇu, as Brahman, the Supreme Spirit. By worshipping the śālagrāma stone men would obtain his favour.

120-123. As the fire residing in a large wood shines at the place of sacrifice, in the same way the all-pervading Viṣṇu shines in the śālagrāma. O vaiśya, worshippers of śālagrāma, even though they are of a sinful conduct or are not entitled to (religious) rites, do not certainly go to Yama's abode. Viṣṇu does not as much rejoice with Lakṣmī or in his own city, as he always rejoices in the disc on the śālagrāma stone. He, who has worshipped Viṣṇu on the disc made of the śālagrāma stone, has performed agnihotra or given the earth with the ocean (as a gift).

124-146a. I shall tell you of the religious merit of him who has duly worshipped the twelve stones produced from śālagrāma rock. That (merit) which would be (obtained) by worshipping with golden lotuses twelve crores of Phalluses twelve times would be (obtained) in a day only (by worshipping a śālagrāma). He who would devoutly worship a hundred śālagrāma stones, would, after living with Viṣṇu, be born as a sovereign emperor here (i.e., on the earth). A mean man pervaded by passions, anger or greed also goes to Viṣṇu's heaven by worshipping a śālagrāma stone. The man who with joy would worship Viṣṇu in a śālagrāma stone, does not fall from heaven till deluge. O vaiśya, men obtain salvation (merely) by worshipping a śālagrāma stone without (visiting) holy places, without (giving) gifts, and without (performing) sacrifices or without (having

any) thought (about it). O vaiśya, the worshipper of a śālagrāma stone, even though he is a sinner, does not go to hell, is (not conceived) in a womb, is not born in a species of birds, or insects, and also he who, conversant with the rite of initiation, its procedure and hymn, would offer an oblation to the disc (does not go to hell). All rivers—Gaṅgā, Godāvarī and Revā which give salvation, abide in the water of śālagrāma. A man who being highly devoted worships in Kaliyuga a śālagrāma by means of various offerings of eatables, flowers, incense, lights, smearings, songs, musical instruments, hymns, rejoices in the company of Viṣṇu for a thousand crores of kalpas. That fruit which is seen (to be obtained) by worshipping and extolling crores of phalluses, is had (by the worship) of a śālagrāma (just) for a day. Men devoid of reasoning on worshipping a phallus made of śālagrāma stone (even) once, go to (i.e., obtain) salvation. Gods, deities, yakṣas and the fourteen worlds live there where Viṣṇu in the form of the śālagrāma stone lives. The manes of the man who has faith in the śālagrāma stone remain pleased in heaven for a hundred kalpas. What is the use of drinking thousand (times) the five products of cow for the men who everyday drink the water from a śālagrāma stone? So also what is the use of visiting thousands of crores of holy places, if a man would drink the auspicious water from the śālagrāma stone? Where there is a śālagrāma stone, there (within a distance of) three yojanas all gifts (given) and sacrifices (performed) would be a crorefold effective. A man devoted to Viṣṇu, who would drink water equal to (i.e., of the measure of) a drop from the śālagrāma stone, would never again drink mother's milk (i.e., would not be born). Even an insect which dies within the distance of a krośa in the vinicity of a śālagrāma goes to the excellent world of Viṣṇu. He who gives the excellent gift, viz. a disc of the śālagrāma stone, has given the globe along with mountains, groves and forests. A man who would beget money (by trading in) the śālagrāma stone, a seller (of the stone) and one who approves of (such sale), and he who takes delight in testing (the stone)—all these go to hell (and live there) till deluge. Therefore, O vaiśya, a man should avoid the purchase or sale of the disc.

146b-151a. O vaiśya, what is the use of prolixity? A man who is afraid of sins, should always do the mental recitation of

the name of Vāsudeva, i.e., Viṣṇu, which removes all sins. A man obtains that fruit by saluting Garuḍa-bannered (Viṣṇu), which he, with his senses controlled, obtains by practising severe penance in a forest. A man, even after having committed, (due to) being full of delusion, many sins, goes to Viṣṇu who removes all sins, (and) not to hell. By reciting the names of Viṣṇu a man obtains (the fruit of having visited) all those holy places and sacred abodes. Those devoted ones who resort to god Viṣṇu, the holder of the Śārṅga (bow), do not reside in the same world as Yama, and would not have a hell as their abode.

151b-152a. O vaiśya, one who is a devotee of Viṣṇu and who censures Śiva would not obtain (i.e., go to) Viṣṇu's heaven; he goes to a great hell.

152b-164. It is heard from Lomaśa that if a man by chance observes fast on the eleventh day of a month, he does not undergo agony (caused) by Yama. There is nothing else that is as purifying as this in the three worlds. Both the days (i.e., the two ekādaśī days) of Viṣṇu destroy sins. O best among vaiśyas, as long as a creature does not observe a fast on the day sacred to Viṣṇu, sins live in his body. Thousands of horse sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūya (sacrifices) are not equal (even) to a sixteenth part of (the merit due to) a fast on the eleventh day. All that sin which men have committed with the eleven organs (of cognition and action), O vaiśya, perishes by (observing) the fast on the eleventh day. There is no other (vow bringing) merit like the (fast on) the ekādaśī (day). Even those who have observed (the ekādaśī-fast) under some pretext, do not go under the sway of the son of the Sun (i.e., Yama). It grants heaven and salvation; it gives good health. It gives a good wife; it gives sons that live (i.e., that do not die before the parents). O vaiśya, Gaṅgā, Gayā, Kāśī, Puṣkara or even any place sacred to Viṣṇu cannot be equated to the day of Viṣṇu (i.e., ekādaśī). Yamunā and Candrabhāgā are not equal to Viṣṇu's day (i.e., ekādaśī) by which the position of Viṣṇu is obtained without any effort. O vaiśya, by keeping awake during the night and observing a fast on Viṣṇu's day a man certainly emancipates ten ancestors of the father's family, ten of the mother's family and ten of the wife's (family). Those, who have given up attachment to the pairs (of opposites), who have made him (i.e., Viṣṇu) having the enemy of

serpents (i.e., Garuḍa) as his banner as their abode, who wear garlands, who have put on yellow garments, go to Viṣṇu's abode. A sinner who observes a fast in his childhood, youth or old age on the ekādaśī day, does not meet with a great misery, O best among vaiśyas.

165-167a. Men go to heaven by having observed a fast for three nights or having bathed at holy places or by having donated gold, sesamum seeds and cows. O vaiśya, those who do not bathe at the sacred places or who have not given (a gift of) gold or who have not practised penance are unhappy everywhere. I have told you in brief what piety is. I have defined hell (also).

167b-170. (A man should have) no malice towards any being by words, thoughts or physical acts. (He should) control (his) senses; (he should give) gifts; (he should) worship Viṣṇu; and should always properly follow the duties pertaining to the caste and stage of life. O vaiśya, a man who desires (to go to) heaven should never tell (anyone) about his penance and gifts. He should thus give according to his capacity and with a desire for his own well-being sandals, garments, food, leaves, roots, fruits and water. O vaiśya, even a poor man should make his day productive.

171-174. In this world and in the next one what is not given does not come (to help a man). The donors do not meet with the agonies (inflicted) by Yama. They have a long life and repeatedly become wealthy. What is the use of talking much in this matter? People meet with misery by wicked deeds. Men (engaged) in pious works everywhere and at all times go up to heaven. Therefore, (right) from childhood one should collect religious merit. Thus I have told you everything. What else do you desire to hear?

Vikuṇḍala said:

175-179 O gentle sir, having heard your words my mind is pleased. The water of Gaṅgā instantly removes sins. (So also) the words of the good remove sins instantly. To oblige (others), to talk agreeably is the natural virtue of the good. Who makes the moon, the orb of (i.e., containing) nectar, cold? O you divine messenger, then tell me through pity towards me who am asking you, how can my brother have instant acquital from hell ?

Hearing these words of (i.e., uttered by) him, the divine messenger, observing meditation for a moment, and being tied by the bond of friendship (with Vikuṇḍala) said: "O vaiśya, if you desire heaven for your brother, then give him all the religious merit that you have collected in your eighth existence."

Vikuṇḍala said:

180. What is that religious merit? How was it produced? Which was my former existence? O messenger, tell all that to me so that I shall quickly give (my religious merit to my brother.)

The dive messenger said:

181-189. O vaiśya, listen, I shall explain to you that merit with its cause. Formerly in the holy Madhuvana lived a sage named Śākuni. He was endowed with penance and learning, and was equal to Brahman in lustre. He begot nine sons like planets on (his wife) Revatī: Dhruva, Śīla, Budha, Tārā, and Jyotiṣmat, as the fifth. These maintained sacred fire and took delight in household duties. Nirmoha, Jitakāma, Dhyānakośa and Guṇādhika—these four sons of the brāhmaṇa were detached from the householder's life. Being free from all desires they took to the fourth stage of life. They lived in the same village. They all were detached and had no possessions. They were devoid of hopes, did not exert themselves, and looked equally upon a clod, a stone and gold. They covered themselves with anything; they ate whatever (they got). They received (food etc. only) in the evening; and they were greatly intent on meditating on Viṣṇu, They had overcome sleep; they had controlled their diet; they endured wind and cold. Looking upon the entire mobile and immobile world as Viṣṇu's form, they easily roamed over the earth. They remained quiet with (i.e., did not talk to) one another. The meditating saints did not perform any act for (personal) gain. They had achieved knowledge, had no doubt and were conversant with the modifications of thought (*cidvikāra*).

190-200a. Thus, these, oppressed by hunger and thirst came in the noon to the house of you, a brāhmaṇa, who were in your eighth existence staying with the members of your family like the son and the wife in Madhyadeśa. You saw them in the courtyard of your house when offerings were being made to all deities

(before meals). With faltering words, with tears in your eyes, with joy and confusion, you greeted them all by prostrating before them respectfully, by saluting their feet by (keeping your) head (on their feet) and joining (the palms of) your hands in obeisance and with sweet and agreeable words: "Today my existence is fruitful, so also my life is fruitful. Today Viṣṇu is pleased with me. Today I have secured a protector, and am purified. Today I am blessed, my house is blessed, members of my family are blessed today, my parents are blessed today, my cows, my learning, my wealth are blessed today, since I have seen your feet removing the three (kinds of) miseries, for seeing you is as fortunate as seeing Viṣṇu himself". Having thus adored them and having washed their feet (with water) you held that (water) on your head with great devotion, O best among the vaiśyas. O vaiśya, you held the water (used) for (washing their) feet on your head. Having worshipped them with sandal (-paste), flowers, sacred rice-grains, incense and lamps with devotion, you fed them with excellent food. The great ascetics were pleased and rested in your house at night meditating upon the highest Brahman which is regarded as the light of lights.

200b-206. O best vaiśya, I cannot describe (even) with a thousand mouths the religious merit which you secured by (your showing) hospitality to them. Among the beings creatures are superior; among creatures the intellectuals are superior. Among the intellectuals gods are superior. Among men brāhmaṇas are superior. Among brāhmaṇas the learned are superior; among the learned those of firm determination are superior. Among those superior are those who carry out their determinations into action. Among them superior are those who know Brahman. Therefore, they are to be very much adored, and so they are best in the three worlds. O best among the vaiśyas, their company destroys great sins. The knowers of Brahman taking rest in the house of a householder and pleased thereby destroy in a moment the sins collected from one's birth. A sage staying (in a householder's home) for a night completely burns the householder's sins accumulated upto his death. Give that religious merit to your brother, by which he will be liberated.

207-209. Hearing these words of the messenger, he quickly

gave hiṣ merit (to his brother). The brother too came out of hell with his mind pleased. Being honoured with a shower of flowers by gods they went to heaven. Well honoured by the two (brothers) the messenger went as he had come. The son of a vaiśya, having heard the messenger's words which enlightened the entire world, which were like the words of the Veda, having emancipated his brother by giving him the merit of his deeds, went with him to the excellent world of the lord of gods.

210. O king, he who would recite or hear this account, would, being free from grief, obtain the fruit of (presenting) a thousand cows.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

Sugandha, Arundhatīvaṭa, Sindhuprabhava etc.

Nārada said:

1-2, Thence, O best of kings, a man should go to Sugandha, well-known in the world. With his soul freed from all sins, he is honoured in Brahmā's world. O king, from there a pilgrim should go to Rudrāvarta. O king, a man having bathed there, is honoured in heaven.

3-4. O best of men, a man who has bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Sarasvatī obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to heaven. Having bathed at Karṇahrada there and having worshipped Śiva, he does not meet with misery and goes to heaven.

5-7a. Thence the pilgrim should in due succession go to Kubjā. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of having given) a thousand cows and goes to heaven. Thence, O king, a pilgrim should go to Arundhatīvaṭa. Having bathed at Samudraka and having fasted for three nights a man would obtain the fruit of (having presented) a thousand cows and goes to heaven.

7b-10a. Being controlled and calm, he should then go to Brahmāvarta. He obtains the (fruit of a) horse sacrifice, and goes to heaven. Having bathed in the water of Yamunā he should go

to (the holy place called) Yamunāprabhava. Having obtained the fruit of a horse sacrifice he is honoured in heaven. Having reached the sacred place called Darvīsaṁkramaṇa, well-known in the three worlds, he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to heaven.

10b-13a. Then having gone to (the holy place called) Sindhuprabhava, the source of Sindhu, resorted to by siddhas and gandharvas and having stayed there for five nights, he should give much gold. Then having reached (the holy place of) the goddess very difficult to reach a man obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and would go to the position of Śukra. Having reached Ṛṣikulyā and Vasiṣṭha also, O descendent of Bharata, and having crossed Vasiṣṭha all the castes become (like) brāhmaṇas.

13b-14. A man having bathed at Ṛṣikulyā goes to the world of sages, if, O king, he, subsisting on vegetables, lives there for a month. Having reached Bhṛgutuṅga he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice.

15-17a. O hero, having gone to Pramokṣa he is free from all sins. A pious man having reached (this) holy place difficult to reach in (the months of) Kārtika and Mārgaśīrṣa obtains the fruit of Agniṣṭoma and Atirātra (sacrifices). Thence having reached Sandhyā and the excellent Vidyātīrtha he should bathe (there). He becomes a master of all lores.

17b-18a. Fasting once a day he should stay for a night at Mahāśrama which frees (a man) from all sins. He (thereby) lives in holy worlds.

18b-21. By living for a month at Mahālaya and by taking food once in three days he having himself crossed (the ocean of the mundane existence) emancipates the creatures—ten preceding and ten succeeding (members of his family). Having seen the very auspicious Maheśvara saluted by gods a man having got all his objects, should not at all grieve for death. He with his soul purified from all sins would obtain much gold. Then he should go to Vetasikā resorted to by the Grandsire. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and would go the highest position.

22-23. Then having reached the holy place (called) Sundarikā resorted to by siddhas, he possesses handsomeness (i.e., becomes handsome). This has been observed by the ancients.

Then, being controlled and calm, he, having gone to Brāhmaṇikā, goes to Brahmā's world in a car having the colour of a lotus.

24-29. Thence he should go to Naimiṣa, the auspicious (place) resorted to by brāhmaṇas. Brahmā always resides there with hosts of gods. Half the sin of him who desires (to go to) Naimiṣa, perishes. A man on just entering it is freed from the entire sin. A wise man intent on (visiting) holy places, should stay there—at Naimiṣa—for a month. O descendant of Bharata, whichever holy places are there on the earth are (present) at Naimiṣa. Being restrained and with his diet controlled a man having bathed (i.e. who bathes) there obtains the fruit of a Rājasūya sacrifice, (and), O best among the Bharatas, purifies (the members of) his family up to the seventh (descendant). The wise say that he who wholly devoted to fasting would cast his life at Naimiṣa, would stay in heaven and rejoice there. O best of kings, Naimiṣa is always pure and holy.

30. A man, having gone to Gaṅgodbheda and having stayed there for three nights obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya (sacrifice) and would always be one with Brahman.

31. Having reached Sarasvatī he should offer oblations to the deities in the form of his manes. There is no doubt that he rejoices in the worlds of the Sārasvatas.

32. O king, thence a pilgrim should go to (the holy place called) Bāhudā. By staying there for a night he is honoured in heaven.

33a. The man obtains the fruit of a Devasatra sacrifice.

33b-34a. Thence he should go to the holy place (called) Rajanī surrounded by meritorious persons. Engaged in worshipping the manes and deities, he would obtain (the fruit of) a Vājapeya (sacrifice).

34b-39a. Having reached (the holy place called) Vimalāśoka he shines like the moon. Having stayed there for a night he is honoured in heaven. Thence he should go to Gopratāra, an excellent holy place (on the bank) of Sarayū, where (-from) Rāma with his servants, army and vehicles, after having left his house, went to heaven due to the prowess of that holy place. Due to Rāma's favour and exertion, O king, a man bathing at

that holy place, viz. Gopratāra, has his soul purified of all sins and is honoured in heaven. O you descendant of Kuru, a man having bathed at Rāmatīrtha on (the bank of) Gomatī, obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and purifies his own family.

39b-40. Then, O best of Bharatas, there is a sacred place called Śatasāhasraka. Being restrained and with his diet controlled, a man, having bathed there, obtains the meritorious fruit (of giving away) a thousand cows, O best of Bharatas.

41-42a. Then a pious man should go to the excellent (holy place called) Ūrdhvasthāna. Having bathed at Koṭitīrtha and having worshipped Guha, O king, a man would obtain the fruit of (giving) a thousand cows, and becomes bright.

42b-44. Then having gone to Vārāṇasī and having worshipped the bull-bannered god (i.e. Śiva) and having bathed at Kapilāhrada, he would obtain the fruit of a Rājasūya (sacrifice). O lord of kings, having reached the Mārkaṇḍeya tīrtha difficult to reach, on the confluence of Gomatī and Gaṅgā, well-known in the world, he obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice and would emancipate his (own) family.

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

The Merits of Vārāṇasī

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O sage, you have described in brief the importance of Vārāṇasī. (Please) tell it in detail. Then (only) my mind is (i.e. would be) pleased.

Nārada said:

2. Now I shall tell you the account based on the merits of Vārāṇasī, merely by hearing which a man is absolved of (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa.

3. Formerly, goddess (Pārvatī) having gone to the seat of the lord asked Mahādeva, the enemy of Tripura, on the peak of Meru:

The goddess said:

4-7. O Mahādeva, god of gods, remover of the affliction of your devotees, how can a man see you soon (i.e. in a short time)? O Śaṅkara, in the world (the path) of Sāṁkhya or Yoga or (of) meditation or Karmayoga laid down in the Vedas are full of great exertion; so also are other (means). Tell me this most secret knowledge which is practised by Indra and others and which destroys the fire of passion, for the good of all beings, by which you, the revered one, who are (so) subtle, can be seen by human beings, the meditating saints with tranquil minds, and those who practise the path of duty.

The lord said:

8-26. I shall now tell you the knowledge which is properly explained by the great sages, which special knowledge is excluded by the ignorant and which should not be told. The city Vārāṇasī is my most secret holy place. It helps all the beings to cross the ocean of the worldly existence. O great goddess, the magnanimous ones observing great restraint live there devoutly practising my vow (i.e. a vow sacred to me). That holy place Avimukta is best among all holy places, is best among all abodes, is thy best knowledge among all (kinds of) knowledge. There are other holy places and sacred abodes situated in crematory and found in divine land. My abode is not at all connected with the world; it is in the Intermediate Space. Those that are not liberated see there; those that are liberated see mentally. This is a famous crematory well-known as Avimukta. O beautiful lady, being Kāla (the god of death) I destroy this world. O goddess, this place is dearer to me of all secrets. My devotees go there and enter me only. Whatever is given there, muttered there, offered or performed there, whichever penance is practised there, and also meditation, study or knowledge (gained) there becomes inexhaustible. All the sin of a man collected in the former thousands of births perishes when he enters Avimukta. Men—brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras, mixtures of castes, women, mlecchas, other mixed tribes of low birth, insects, ants, other beasts and birds, when they die at the proper time at Avimukta, O beautiful lady, are born in my auspicious city as having crescent moon on their

heads, three eyes, and having great bulls as their vehicles. No sinner who dies at Avimukta goes to hell. Being favoured by the lord all of them go to the highest position. A man thinking that salvation is difficult to obtain and realising that the mundane existence is extremely terrible, having broken his feet with stone, should live in Vārāṇasī. O goddess, the path liberating from the mundane existence one who dies here or there is difficult to be obtained even by penance. O daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, by my favour (everything) takes place duly. Those who are immature do not see as they are deluded by my illusory power. They again and again live in feces, urine and semen. A learned man, though smitten by hundreds of dangers, goes to the highest place, going where he is not unhappy. He goes to Śiva's abode free from birth, death and old age.

27-28. The position of those who desire salvation is the same as of those who do not die again, and reaching which, the learned think, one is blessed. The position that is obtained on (reaching salvation) is not obtained by gifts, penance, sacrifices or knowledge.

29-35. The wise know that Avimukta is a great medicine for the people of various castes or having no castes, the caṇḍālas that are condemned, with their bodies filled with blemishes and big sins. Avimukta is great knowledge; Avimukta is a great seat; Avimukta is a great fact; Avimukta is highly auspicious. I give them who, having firm dedication, live at Avimukta, that highest knowledge, that highest position. Prayāga, Naimiṣāraṇya, Śrīśaila, Mahābala, Kedāra, Bhadrakarṇa, Gayā and Puṣkara, also Kurukṣetra, Bhadrakoṭi, Narmadā, Mrātakeś-varī, Śālagrāma, Kubjāmra, the excellent Kokāmukha, Prabhāsa, Vijayeśāna, Gokarṇa and Bhadrakarṇa—these holy places are well-known in the three worlds. Men who die (here) do not go to the highest principle as those who die at Vārāṇasi.

36-56. If a man enters (i.e. bathes in) Gaṅgā, flowing in three streams, especially at Vārāṇasī, it would destroy the sin committed in hundreds of his former births. Gaṅgā is easy to reach at other places. Śrāddha, gifts, penance, muttering (of a deity's names), vows—all this is very difficult to be found at Vārāṇasī. A man living at Vārāṇasī would mutter (names of deities), would offer oblations, gives gifts everyday, worships

gods, always eats (i.e. subsists upon) air. Even if a man is a sinner or a rogue, he purifies the entire family on reaching Vārāṇasī. Those, who worship and extol Mahādeva at Vārāṇasī, are free from all sins and should be known as the lord of Śiva's attendants. At other places the highest place is reached only after a hundred births by means of the practice of yoga (i.e. deep meditation), knowledge or othar things. But O you wife of the lord of gods, those devotees who stay at Vārāṇasī, obtain the best salvation in one birth only. Where the path of yoga and the path of knowledge (are combined), salvation is obtained in one birth only. A man having reached Avimukta would not desire (to go to) any other penance-grove. Since I have not abandoned it, it is said to be Avimukta. That is the secret of secrets. This is said to be wisdom. O you beautiful one, that position which is got by those that are devoted to knowledge or ignorance, and are desirous of the highest joy, is obtained by him who dies at Avimukta. Vārāṇasī is more holy than all the places that are seen in the body of Avimukta where the lord Mahādeva himself explained for Avimukta the liberating Brahman. A man would obtain in Vārāṇasī, that which is said to be the higher principle Avimukta, in (just) one birth. As between the two eye-brows, as in the navel, in the heart or the head, in the sun, so Avimukta is well-established in Vārāṇasī. Vārāṇasī city is (situated) between Varaṇā and Asī. There only is well settled the principle of Avimukta. There was never, or there never will be a higher place than Vārāṇasī, where (live) god Nārāyaṇa, and Mahādeva, the lord in heaven. There gods with gandharvas, yakṣas, serpents and demons always worship him, (who is) the god of gods, the grandsire. O goddess, the great sinners, those who are greater sinners than they are, go to the highest position after having come to Vārāṇasī. Therefore, he who desires salvation, should, being restrained, stay at Vārāṇasī till death. Getting knowledge from Mahādeva he is liberated. But difficulties may come up in the case of one whose mind is smitten with sin. Therefore one should not commit a sin by body, mind or speech. O you of a good vow, this is the secret of gods and Purāṇas. Nobody truly knows (i.e. has) the knowledge about Avimukta.

Nārada said:

57-65. The god of gods told the entire (account) that destroys all sins to the deities and sages and the spiritual teachers that were listening. As Viṣṇu is the greatest among the gods, as Śiva is the greatest among lords, so is this place the best of all places. Those who have propitiated Rudra in a former birth, obtain (i.e. visit) the great holy place Avimukta, the abode of Śiva. Those whose mind is taken away due to having been born in Kali age, are not able to know that great place of the spiritual teacher. The sin of those who always remember and talk about this city, quickly perishes in this world and the next. God Śiva having time as his body would destroy all those sins which those who have taken an abode here commit. A man should come to (i.e. visit) this place resorted to by those who desire salvation; those who die would not be again born in the ocean of the mundane existence. Therefore by all efforts a man, whether he is a yogi or no yogi, whether a sinner or the most virtuous one, should live in Vārāṇasi. The thought about (visiting) Avimukta should not be changed even by the words of the people, or of the father, or of the preceptor.

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

The Greatness of Kṛttivāseśvara

Nārada said:

1-14a. There is a pure auspicious Phallus called Oṁkāra, merely by remembering which a man is freed from all sins. This is superior knowledge, the excellent Pañcāyatana, which is always resorted to by sages in Vārāṇasī, and which liberates (men). There actually Mahādeva, Rudra, who gives liberation to creatures rejoices in the form of the five abodes. This knowledge relating to Paśupati (i.e. Śiva) is called Pañcāyatana. This is that pure Phallus, Oṁkāra, that stands there. The Phallus of the lord is of five forms: Śāntyatītā, Śānti, Aparāvarā Vīdyā (i.e.

higher and lower knowledge), Pratiṣṭhā and Nivṛtti. The Phallus that supports the five Liṅgas, Brahmā and others, and that is indicative of Oṁkāra, is called Pañcāyatana. A wise man should remember the immutable Liṅga, i.e. Pañcāyatana, of the lord. At the end of his body (i.e. when he dies) he enters the highest light, joy. There formerly gods, sages, siddhas, brāhmaṇic sages ultimately obtained the best position after having waited upon the lord. O lord of kings, on the auspicious bank of Matsyodarī there is the most secret place, of the size of gocarma (cow's hide), the excellent Oṁkāreśvara; there is the Liṅga called Kṛttivāseśvara, the excellent Madhyameśvara, and also Viśveśvara, Oṁkāra and Kandarpeśvara. O Yudhiṣṭhira, these are the secret Liṅgas in Vārāṇasī. Nobody here knows (i.e. experiences) destruction due to Śambhu's favour. O king, listen to the greatness of Kṛttivāseśvara. At that time formerly a demon having become an elephant came there near Śiva to kill the brāhmaṇas who were everyday worshipping Śiva. From the Liṅga of them Mahādeva, the three-eyed (god), affectionate towards his devotees, came there for the protection of his devotees.

14b-25. Śiva having with contempt killed the demon in the form of the elephant by means of his trident used his hide as his garment. Therefore, he is known as Kṛttivāseśvara. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the sages obtained a great superhuman power and with the same body obtained that highest position. Those who are called Vidyāvidyeśvara, Rudra, Śiva, have always resorted to the Liṅga (called) Krttivāseśvara. Men knowing that Kaliyuga is fearful and full of great impiety, do not forsake Kṛttivāsa; by doing so they are undoubtedly blessed. (At other places) liberation may or may not be obtained after a thousand existences; but at this Kṛttivāsa liberation is obtained after (just) one existence. They describe this place to be the abode of all siddhas, protected by Śambhu Mahādeva, the lord of gods. In every yuga brāhmaṇas that are controlled and are masters of deep meditation worship the magnanimous one and mutter the (hymn called) Śatarudriya. They constantly extol god Tryambaka, having the garment of (elephant-)hide. They meditate in their heart upon Śiva, Sthāṇu, who is in the heart of all. Siddhas, the brāhmaṇas who live at Vārāṇasi sing songs. Even by means

of one song salvation would take place in the case of those who resort to Kṛttivāsa. They obtain a birth very difficult to obtain, which is desired, in brāhmaṇa families. Being steady in meditation, the sages maditate upon Rudra, the great lord, in their hearts. The best sages, living in Vārāṇasī, propitiate the supreme lord. They perform sacrifices without any (selfish) aim; they praise Rudra; they salute Śambhu. "I salute Bhava, the abode of pure, deep meditation. I resort to the ancient Girīśa. I remember Rudra, settled in my heart; I know Mahādeva of many forms."

CHAPTFR THIRTYFIVE

Greatness of Kapardin

Nārada said:

1-2a. Now there is another excellent Liṅga, (called) Kapardīśvara. O king, having bathed there according to proper rites and offered oblations to manes, one is freed from all sins and obtains salvation and enjoyment.

2b-11. Then there is another holy place called Piśācamocana. There is the wonderful (form of) god that gives salvation and that removes all blemishes. A demon taking up a terrible form of a tiger went to the excellent Kapardīśvara to eat up a female deer. There she with her heart frightened again and again circumambulated (the deity). Running and extremely perpflexed she came under the sway of the tiger. That very strong tiger having torn her with sharp nails went to another place after having noticed the best sages. That young female deer almost dead looked in front of Kapardīśa, like a great flame, lustrous like the moon in the sky. (She appeared) to have three eyes, dark blue throat, and with her hair on the head marked with the moon, to have mounted upon a bull, and surrounded by men like her only. The (divine) beings roaming in the sky, showered upon her flowers on all sides. Being turned into one of the female chiefs of Śiva's attendants she vanished

just at that moment only. Seeing that great wonder the gods and others praised it. That is the Liṅga of Śiva called Kapardīś-vara, the best one. By merely remembering, it a man gets quickly free from his sins. All blemishes like passion, anger, and difficulties of the residents of Vārāṇasī perish by worshipping Kapardīśvara.

12-14. Therefore one should always see the excellent Kapardīśvara, one should worship (the Phallus) with great care, and should extol (the lord) with Vedic hymns. There is no doubt that the meditating saints of tranquil minds who always meditate (upon the lord), attain perfection within six months. By wor-shipping this deity sins like killing a brāhmaṇa perish, since one who has bathed in the tank called Piśācamocana obtains peace.

15-24. Formerly, a brāhmaṇa ascetic of a severe vow and known as Śaṅkukarṇa worshipped Śiva at that holy place. He constantly muttered (the names of) Rudra of the form of Brahman. The meditating saint taking the vow devoutly wor-shipped there the lord by means of flowers, incense etc., hymns, salutation and circumambulations. Once he saw a hungry ghost with its body covered with bones and skin, sighing repeatedly, that had come there. Having seen him the best sage full of great pity said (to him): "Who are you? From what region have you come to this region?" The ghost oppressed by hunger, said (these) words to him: "In my former existence I was a brāhmaṇa having wealth and grains. I had sons and grandsons and was eager to maintain my family. I did not worship great deities, cows and guests. I never did any small or big (act of) religious merit. Once I saw the revered Viśveśvara having the lord of bulls as his vehicle, touched him, and saluted him. Then after a short time I died. (But) O sage, I did not see (i.e. go to) that very terrible house of Yama. Now, being overpowered by thirst I do not know what is beneficial or otherwise. O lord, if you see some means to emancipate me, (please) do it. Salutation to you. I have sought your refuge (now)."

25-28. Śaṅkukarṇa who was thus addressed by the ghost, said to him: "There is no person like you who has done the most meritorious deed, since you have formerly seen Śiva, the lord of the universe. You touched him and again saluted him. Who else in the world is like you? Due to the ripening of the

deed you have come to this region. Being calm, quickly cast off this vile body here only."

29-34. That ghost, thus addressed by that kind sage, remembered after making his mind tranquil, Kapardīśvara, the best, three-eyed god, and bathed there. Then, he having bathed there near the sage and endowed with divine ornaments died and was seen in an aeroplane resembling the sun and had his charming head marked with the moon. With Rudras living in heaven and being looked after by the meditating saints along with the unbounded Vālakhilyas,[1] he shines like the full god, the sun at the time of rising. Siddhas and hosts of gods praise him in the heaven. Charming celestial nymphs danced. Gandharvas, Vidyādharas and kinnaras etc. showered flowers mixed with water. Being praised by the groups of the best sages, having secured knowledge by the favour of the lord, he entered that best orb full of the three (gods) where Rudra shines. Seeing the ghost liberated the sage, being pleased in mind, thought about Rudra, the only wise one, saluted Agni, and praised that Kapardin.

Śaṅkukarṇa said:

35. I approach you, Kapardin, greater than the great, the protector, the only ancient man, the lord of deep meditation, the giver of desired objects, the sun, the fire, and the one mounted upon a tawny bull.

36-44. I seek the refuge of you, the essence of Brahman, placed in my heart, full of gold, possessing miraculous power, the beginning and the end (of the world), Rudra, staying in heaven, a great sage, of the nature of Brahman and pure, endowed with a thousand feet, eyes and heads of a thousand forms, and (remaining) beyond darkness. I salute the eternal Śambhu, the extreme limit of Brahman, the revered one, the lord, the lord of Hiraṇyagarbha, the three-eyed one, and also seek the refuge of (you), wherefrom the world has originated, and unto whom it will perish (i.e. merge), and by whom, i.e. Śiva,

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1. Vālakhilyas—This is the name of a class of sages of the size of a thumb. Sixty thousand were produced from Brahmā's body and surround the chariot of the sun.

this entire (world) is pervaded. I salute you, who are without any characteristic mark, whose form cannot be seen, who are your own lord and of that of the soul, who are of a uniform nature, who are beyond Brahman, and who are the highest lord, other than whom nothing exists; whom the meditating saints who have become one with the highest soul. giving up meditation along with mystical letter forming the essential part of the hymn, after securing concentration see. I always bow to him who is beyond Brahman and of the highest form. I always salute him who is beyond Brahman, who has no qualification like a name, whose form cannot be seen. I seek your shelter, of the self-born one. I always salute your form which is beyond Brahman, which is not one, which, those engaged in Vedic recitals see to be without a body, to be without distinctions, to be one along with the knowledge of Brahman, from which Pradhāna (or Prakṛti) and the ancient Puruṣa obtain lustre, (which) the gods salute. I salute him, remaining in the lustre, the huge time, which is your form. I always seek the refuge of Guheśa; I approach the ancient Sthāṇu (i.e. Śiva), living on the mountain. I approach Śiva, Hari, (Śiva) having the moon on his head, the trident-holder. I seek your refuge.

45-47. Thus having praised the revered Kapardin, Śaṅkukarṇa also prostrated himself on the ground and uttered the highest (syllable) Om. At that moment only the great Phallus of Śiva appeared there. It was knowledge, joy, and very much like the fire having a crore of flames. Śaṅkukarṇa's soul was liberated. His pure soul moved everywhere. It merged into that pure Phallus. (Thus) a great wonder took place.

48-50. I have thus told you the secret and the greatness of Kapardin. Nobody knows it. Even a learned man is deluded through ignorance. He who would daily listen to this account that destroys sins, would with his soul being purified due to having abandoned sins, secure proximity with Rudra. He who being pure would always recite this hymn (called) Brahmapāra in the morning, noon and evening would secure the highest contemplation.

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

The Greatness of Madhyameśa

Nārada said:

1-2a. O great king, at Vārāṇasī, there is the best (place called) Madhyameśa. At that place that great lord Mahādeva always rejoices with the goddess (i.e. Pārvatī) and is surrounded by the Rudras. Formerly the universal god Hṛṣīkeśa, Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, lived there for a year (and was) always surrounded by devotees of Śiva.

2b-5a. With his entire body smeared with dust, and intent upon studying Rudra(-hymn), and observing the vow of the devotee of Śiva, Hari (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) worshipped Śiva. All those many disciples of him, intent upon celibacy, got knowledge from his mouth and saw Maheśvara.

5b-9a. That great revered lord Nīlalohita (i.e. Śiva), the giver of boons, directly gave an excellent boon to Kṛṣṇa. "Those devotees of meine who worship Govinda with proper rites, will have the knowledge belonging to Śiva, which is full of the world. Those who are devoted to me, should salute him, should worship him and should meditate upon him. There is no doubt that by my favour they will have no birth. The sin like killing a brāhmaṇa etc. of those who here see after bathing the lord of gods, the trident-holder, quickly perishes.

9b-10a. Those mortals who, though engaged in sinful acts, die here, also go to that highest place. No doubt should be raised in this matter.

10b-12. Those wise men who after bathing in Gaṅgā, after having worshipped the lord Mahādeva, Madhyameśvara, (obtain) knowledge, (practise) penance, and offer śrāddha and piṇḍa at this place are blessed. Each one of these rites that are performed, purifies (the members of his) family up to the seventh descendant. The fruit that a man gets here is tenfold of the fruit that he gets by bathing at Sannihati, when the Sun is eclipsed by Rāhu.

13. O great king, I have thus told you about the greatness of Madhyameśvara. He who listens to it with great devotion, goes to the highest position.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

Other Holy Places of Vārāṇasī

Nārada said:

1. O Yudhiṣṭhira, O great king, there are also other holy places situated in Vārāṇasī. Listen to (the description of) them.

2-9. The holy place superior to Prayāga (the place of the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā) is the auspicious Prayāga (a holy place at Vārāṇasī). Similarly there is a holy place called Viśvatīrtha, and also the excellent holy place Tālatīrtha. There is the holy place called Ākāśa, so also the excellent one called Ārṣabha (i.e. sacred to Ṛṣabha). There is the great holy place called Sunīla, and the excellent holy place called Gaurītīrtha. So also there is the holy place called Prājāpatya and there is the (holy place called) Svargadvāra. There is also the (holy place called) Jambukeśvara and the excellent Dharma. The Gayātīrtha is a great holy place, so also Mahānadī is a holy place. Nārāyaṇa is a great holy place and Vāyutīrtha is excellent. Jñānatīrtha is a great secret place, and Vārāhatīrtha is excellent. Yamatīrtha is auspicious; so also Sammūrtika is holy. O great king, there is the Agnitīrtha, and there is also the excellent holy place Kalaśeśvara. So also there are (the holy places called) Nāgatīrtha, Somatīrtha and Sūryatīrtha. Then there is the very secret (holy place) called Parvata; so also there is the excellent Maṇikarṇya. Ghaṭotkaca is the best holy place, so also there is the Śrītīrtha (sacred to) the Grandsire. Gaṅgātīrtha is (sacred) to the lord of gods. So also Yayātitīrtha is excellent. There is the sacred place holy to Kapila; so also there is (the holy place called) Someśa; so also there is (the holy place called) Brahmatīrtha.

10-12. When Brahmā had formerly come there to instal the ancient Liṅga, Viṣṇu installed that Liṅga of the lord at that time. Having bathed there and having come (to Viṣṇu), Brahmā said to Viṣṇu: "I had brought this Liṅga. Why did you instal it?" Viṣṇu said to him: "My devotion to Rudra is stronger than yours. Therefore I have installed the Liṅga. It will be named after you."

13. Similarly there is the holy place called Bhūteśvara, so

also there is Dharmasamudbhava. Then there is the auspicious Gandharvatīrtha, and there is the holy place called Vāhneya (i.e. sacred to Agni).

14-19. O Yudhiṣṭhira, there are holy places called Daurvāsika, Vyomatīrtha, Candratīrtha, Cintāṅgadeśvaratīrtha, and the auspicious Vidyādhareśvara. There are (also the holy places called) Kedāratīrtha, Ugra, and the excellent Kālañjara; so also Sārasvata, Prabhāsa, and the auspicious Rudrakarmahrada. There is the great holy place (called) Kokila, and there is the holy place called Mahālaya. So also there is the excellent holy place Hiraṇyagarbha. There is also the excellent holy place (called) Gopreksa. Then there are the holy places (like) Upaśānta, Śiva, the excellent Vyāghreśvara, the great holy place Trilocana, so also Lokārka and Uttara. There is the holy place (called) Kapālamocana, destroying (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. (Then) there is the very holy place (called) Śukreśvara, so also there is the excellent Ānandapura. These are the holy places situated in Vārāṇasī. Even during crores of kalpas, it would not be possible to describe them in detail.

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

Gayā and Other Holy Places

Nārada said:

1. O lord, I have described to you in brief the greatness of Vārāṇasi, and the holy places (situated) in it. (Now) listen to (the description of) other holy places.

2-4. O descendant of Bharata, a man being restrained and calm, having gone to Gayā, obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice merely by going there. There is (a place) named Akṣayavaṭa known in the three worlds. O lord, oblations offered to the manes at that place become inexhaustible. Having bathed in the Mahānadī he should offer oblations to manes and deities. (By doing so) he would obtain (i.e. go to) the imperishable worlds and would liberate his family.

5-6. Then he should go to Brahmasaras served by (i.e. in) Brahmāraṇya. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) Puṇḍarīka (sacrifice) as the night obtains the dawn. Brahmā has raised (i.e. put up) the best sacrificial post in the lake. By circumambulating the sacrificial post he would obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya sacrifice.

7-10. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to Dhenuka, well-known in the world. Living there even for a night and offering a sesamum-cow he with his soul purified of all sins, would certainly go to Soma's world. There is, O great king, even now the mark: A tawny cow along with her calf still roams over the mountain. The foot-prints of the cow with her calf are seen even now. Having bathed in (the water collected at) those foot-prints, O lord of kings, O best king, little sin that is (left) perishes, O descendant of Bharata.

11-12. Thence he should go to Gṛdhravaṭa, the place of the god, viz. the trident-holder (i.e. Śiva). He should bathe there and (apply) ashes after meeting (i.e. visiting) the bull-bannered god. A brāhmaṇa, thereby, would have observed a vow for twelve years. All the sin of other castes perishes.

13-18. Thence he should go to the high mountain resounding with music. O best among the Bharatas, the place sacred to Sāvitrī is seen there. A brāhmaṇa with a severe vow should offer the sandhyā(-prayer) there. By (doing) that he would have offered the sandhyā(-prayer) for twelve years. O best of Bharatas, Yonidvāra is there only. Having gone there a man is freed from the danger of (being conceived in) a womb. O king, a man who would live in Gayā for both the bright and dark fortnights (of a month), purifies his family up to the seventh (descendant). There is no doubt about this. Many sons would be desired by him (i.e. he would have many sons) even if he would go to Gayā all alone. He might perform a horse sacrifice or give a dark blue bull. Then O king, O lord of men, a pilgrim should go to Phalgu. (By doing so) he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and would reach (i.e. get) the highest well-being.

19-20a. Thence, being tranquil he should, O lord of kings, go to Dharmapṛṣṭha where, O Yudhiṣṭhira, Dharma (i.e. Righteousness) always lives. Having seen Dharma, he would obtain (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice.

20b-23. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the excellent holy place of Brahmā. Having gone there and having been settled in a vow he should worship Brahmā. O descendant of Bharata, (thereby) he obtains the fruit of Rājasūya and horse sacrifices. Thence, O king, a pilgrim should go to Rājagṛha. Having bathed there he rejoices like Kakṣīvat.[1] The food is (there) regularly offered to Yakṣiṇī. The sacred Fire-Man formerly lived there. By the favour of Yakṣiṇī he is freed from (the sin) of killing a brāhmaṇa.

24-25. Thence he should go to Maṇināga. He would (thereby) obtain the fruit (of the gift) of a thousand cows. O king, the poison of the bite of a serpent does not affect him who enjoys the food regularly offered to Maṇināga. Having stayed there for a night he is freed from all sins.

26-29a. O king, thence he should go to the grove of Gautama, the brāhmaṇic sage. Having bathed in the pool of Ahalyā he would reach the highest position. Reaching Śrī, he gets excellent wealth. O pious one, there is a tank well-known in the three worlds. He should bathe there. (Thereby) he would obtain (the fruit of) a horse-sacrifice. The tank of the royal sage Janaka is honoured by gods. Having bathed there he would obtain Viṣṇu's heaven.

29b-30a. Thence he should go to (the holy place called) Vināśana which frees (a man) from all sins. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Soma's world.

30b-36a. (Then) he should go to Gaṇḍakī produced from the water of all sacred places. (Thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya sacrifice and goes to the Sun's world. Thence, O pious one, having entered the penance-grove of Dhruva he undoubtedly rejoices among guhyakas, O noble one. Having reached the river Karmadā resorted to by siddhas he obtains (the fruit of) Puṇḍarīka (sacrifice) and goes to Soma's world. Thence having reached the river Viśālā, well-known in the three worlds, he obtains (the fruit of) Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice) and goes to heaven. Then O king, having reached Dhārā of (i.e. sacred to) Maheśvara he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and

1. Kakṣīvān—He was a famous sage and was credited with the authorship of a few Vedic hymns. He was the son of Uśij and Dīrghatamas.

would liberate his family. A pure man having reached the lake of the residents of heaven does not meet with a disaster and obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya (sacrifice).

36b-39. Then being restrained and calm he should go to (the sacred place called) Māheśapada. Having bathed at Māheśapada he would obtain (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice. O best among the Bharatas, there is a well-known, excellent sacred place taken away by the mighty Viṣṇu when, O lord of kings, it was being seized by a wicked demon Kūrmarūpa. O king, a man should bathe at that excellent holy place Tīrthakoṭi; (thereby) he obtains (the fruit of) a Puṇḍarīka sacrifice and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

40-46. Thence, O best of men, he should go to the best place of Nārāyaṇa, where, O descendant of Bharata, Viṣṇu always lives in the vicinity and where gods like Brahmā and others, sages with penance as their wealth, and also Ādityas, Vasus and Rudras wait upon Viṣṇu. The place of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu of wonderful deeds is known as Śālagrāma. Having gone to the imperishable Viṣṇu, the lord of the three worlds and the giver of boons, a man obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. O pious one, there is a pool freeing (a man) from all sins. In that pool all the four oceans are always present. Having bathed there, O lord of kings, a man would not meet with misery. Having gone to the everlasting, great god Viṣṇu, the giver of boons, he being free from debts, shines like Soma (i.e. the moon). Having approached Jātismara, he, pure and with his mind controlled, obtains the faculty of recollecting his former births after bathing there. There is no doubt about this.

47-48. Having gone to Vaṭeśvarapura and having worshipped Keśava (there) a man obtains (i.e. goes to) desired worlds by fasting there. There is no doubt about this. Thence, having gone to (the sacred place called) Vāmana, which destroys all sins and having worshipped Viṣṇu, he would not meet with a disaster.

49-50a. Having gone to Bharata's hermitage freeing (a man) from all sins he should there resort to Kauṣikī destroying great sins. A man (thereby) obtains the fruit of a Rājasūya sacrifice.

50b-59. Thence, O pious one, he should go to the excellent Campakāraṇya. Having stayed there for a night he would obtain the fruit of giving away a thousand cows. Then having reached the sacred place (called) Govinda liked by the best ones and having fasted there for a night, he would obtain the fruit of Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice). O best among the Bharatas, having seen there the very lustrous lord of the world along with the goddess he would obtain (i.e. go to) the worlds of Mitra and Varuṇa. Having fasted there for three nights he would obtain the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice). Then, being controlled and with his diet controlled he having reached Kanyāvasatha obtains (i.e. goes to) the worlds of Manu Prajāpati, O best of the Bharatas. Sages of severe vows say that even the smallest gift which men give at Kanyāvasatha becomes inexhaustible. Having reached Niṣṭhāvāsa, well-known in the three worlds, he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. O best among men, those men who give gifts at the confluence of Niṣṭhā, go to the good world of Brahmā. There is Vasiṣṭha's hermitage well-known in the three worlds. A man who bathes there obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya (sacrifice). Having reached Devakūṭa resorted to by hosts of divine sages he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and would liberate his family.

60-73. Thence, O lord of kings, he should go to the lake of the sage Kauṣika, where Viśvāmitra, the son of Kauśika, obtained the highest welfare. O best among the Bharatas, the wise one should live for a month there, i.e. at Kauśikī. After a month he obtains the religious merit which is due to a horse sacrifice. He who would stay at Mahāhrada, the best among all holy places, does not meet with a disaster and would obtain much gold. Having (then) gone to Kumāra staying in Vīrāśrama he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to Indra's world. O you who perpetuate the Kuru-family, having gone to the lake at Nandinī resorted to by gods he obtains that fruit which is due to a human sacrifice. Having bathed at Kālikāsaṅgama, the confluence of Kauśikī and Āruṇī, and having fasted there for three nights a wise man is freed from all sins. A wise man having reached Urvaśī-tīrtha and having bathed in Kumbhakarṇāśrama, is honoured in the world. Similarly, being restrained and calm he having bathed at Kokāmukha gets

the faculty of recollecting his former existence. This has been observed by the ancients. Reaching Sakṛt river a brāhmaṇa becomes blessed. With his soul freed from all sins he goes to heaven. Having reached Ṛṣabhadvīpa he should resort to Krauñcaniṣūdana. Having bathed at Sarasvatī he seated in an aeroplane shines. O great king, Audyānaka is a great holy place resorted to by sages. He should bathe there. (By doing so) he is freed from all sins. There is no doubt that a man reaching the holy Brahmatīrtha resorted to by brāhmaṇic sages obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya sacrifice. Then having reached Campā and having bathed in Bhāgīrathī and having reached Daṇḍārpaṇa he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. Thence a man should go to the auspicious Lāviḍhikā resorted to by the holy ones. (By that) he obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya sacrifice and seated in an aeroplane he is honoured.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

Savidyā Sandhyā, Lauhitya, Karatoyā, etc.

Nārada said:

1-2. Then having reached Savidyā Sandhyā, the excellent holy place and having bathed there a man becomes learned. There is no doubt about this. Having reached the holy place Lauhitya, made the chief holy place by Rāma in olden days, he would obtain much gold.

3. Having reached Karatoyā a man who fasts (there) for three nights obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice, and goes to Indra's world.

4. O lord of kings, the wise say that a man obtains ten times (the fruit of an Aśvamedha by fasting) at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean.

5. O descendant of Bharata, he who, after having reached the yonder island in Gaṅgā, bathes there and fasts for three nights would obtain all desired objects.

6-7. Then having gone to the river Vaitaraṇī which frees (a person) from sins and reaching Virāja tīrtha, he shines like the moon. (By bathing) at Prabhava he purifies his family and destroys all sin. Obtaining the fruit of (the gift of) a thousand cows he purifies his family.

8-9. A pure man living at the confluence of Śoṇa and Jyotirathī after offering oblations to manes and deities, would get the fruit of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice. Having bathed at Vaṁśagulma at the source of Śoṇa and Narmadā he would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice, O best among the Kurus.

10-11. A man having reached Ṛṣabhatīrtha in Kośala and having fasted there for three nights obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice. Reaching Kālatīrtha in Kośala a man should bathe (there). There is no doubt that he obtains the fruit eleven times greater than that of (giving away) a bull.

12-15. Having bathed at Puṣpavatī, a man who has fasted for three nights, would obtain the fruit (of giving away) a thousand cows and would liberate his family. Then, having with a restrained mind bathed at the Badarikātīrtha a man obtains long life and goes to heaven. Then reaching Mahendra resorted to by (Paraśurāma) the son of Jamadagni a man who bathes at Rāmatīrtha, obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice. The field (i.e. place) of Mātaṅga is just there, O best of Bharatas. O king, having bathed there a man would obtain the fruit of (giving away) a thousand cows.

16-18. Having reached Śrīparvata he should bathe at the bank of the river. Thereby he obtains (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and goes to the great welfare. On Śrīparvata Mahādeva of great lustre and highly delighted lived. So also Brahmā surrounded by gods (lived there). A pure man with his mind controlled obtains after bathing at the Devahrada (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice and obtains great welfare.

19-20. Having gone to the Ṛṣabha mountain in the Bhāṇḍa (region) which is adored by gods he obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya and rejoices in heaven. Thence a man should go to Kāverī thronged by hosts of celestial nymphs. O king, having bathed there a man would obtain the fruit of (giving away) a thousand cows.

21-30a. He should, at that holy place of the ocean, bathe at

Kanyātīrtha. O lord of kings, having bathed there, he is freed from all sins. Then, O lord of kings, having reached Gokarṇa in the sea, revered by people, where gods like Brahmā and others, all sages with penance as their wealth, goblins, yakṣas, ghosts, kinnaras with great serpents, siddhas, cāraṇas, gandharvas, human beings, snakes, rivers, oceans and mountains wait upon the lord of Umā, a man having fasted for three nights and having worshipped the lord (Śiva) obtains (the fruit of) ten horse sacrifices and the status of the chief of Śiva's attendants. Having fasted for twelve nights, a man is blessed. There only is the place of Gāyatrī well-known in three worlds. Having stayed there for three nights a man would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows. This is confirmed by direct evidence of brāhmaṇas, O king. A twice-born, born of the mixture of castes by unlawful inter-marriage, who recites the Gāyatrī (-hymn) there, is furnished with a religious verse or a song(?), O king. Sāvitrī, however, goes away from a non-brāhmaṇa reciting (Gāyatrī-hymn). O brāhmaṇa-sage, having reached the tank at Saṁvarta, difficult to be reached, a man partakes of handsomeness (i.e. becomes handsome) and becomes fortunate.

30b-31a. Thence having reached Veṇā he should offer oblations to the manes and deities. A man (thereby) obtains an aeroplane to which peacocks and swans are yoked.

31b-33a. Thence having reached Godāvarī always resorted to by siddhas, he obtains (the fruit of) a Gavāmaya and goes to the world of Vāyu. Having bathed at the confluence of Veṇā he would obtain the fruit of a Vājapeya. Having bathed at Varadāsaṅgama, he would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows.

33b-39. A man having reached Brahmasthūṇā, and having fasted (there) for three nights, would obtain the fruit of (having given away) a thousand cows, and he goes to heaven. Being restrained and calm, he, having reached Kubjavana, and having fasted for three nights and bathed there, would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows. Then having bathed (i.e. he should bathe) in Devahrada formed in the water of Kṛṣṇaveṇā, and also in Jyotirmātra tank, and in Kanyāśrama, where, having performed a hundred sacrifices, (Indra) the lord

of gods, went to heaven. By merely going there, a man would obtain (the fruit of) a hundred Agniṣṭoma sacrifices. Having bathed in the Sarvadevahrada, he would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows. A man having bathed in the Jātimātrahrada has (the faculty of) recollecting his former births. Then he should go to the tank (in) the very auspicious Payoṣṇī, the best of rivers. A man engaged in worshipping his manes and deities (there), would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows. O great king, having reached Daṇḍaka-forest he should bathe there.

40-42. (He should also bathe) after going to the hermitage of Śarabhaṅga, and also of the magnanimous Śuka. He does not meet with a disaster, and purifies his own family. Thence he should go to Sūryāraka, resorted to by Jamadagni. A man having bathed at Rāmatīrtha would obtain much gold. Being controlled and having restrained his diet, he, after having bathed at Saptagodāvarī, obtains great religious merit, and goes to heaven.

43-52. Thence, being restrained and having controlled his diet, a man should go to (the holy place called) Devapatha. He obtains that merit which is obtained by performing (the sacrifice named) Devasatra. Being a religious student and with his senses controlled, he should reach Tuṅgakāraṇya where formerly the eloquent one taught the sages the Vedas that were lost. The son of the sage Aṅgiras formerly sat on the upper garments of the great sages, O descendant of Bharata. Due to Oṁkāra that was properly and correctly pronounced, that which was repeated (-ly thought) by a sage stood before him. There, the sages, the gods, Varuṇa, Agni, Prajāpati, god Hari Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), Śiva, also the revered and very lustrous Brahmā, along with the gods appointed the very lustrous Bhṛgu to officiate as a priest at the sacrifice. Then the revered one settled all the sages according to the rite as observed by the gods and in the proper manner (in their proper positions). Gods and sages properly pleased by (their) portion of ghee went happily to the three worlds. O best king, the sin of a person—a woman or a man—who enters that forest, suddenly perishes. A wise man being controlled and with his diet restrained, should stay there for a month.

(Thereby) he would go to Brahmā's world and again purifies his family (also).

53-57a. Having reached Medhāvana, a man should offer oblations to manes and deities. (By doing so) he gets (the fruit of) an Agniṣṭoma (sacrifice), and also memory and intelligence. Having gone to Kālañjara there, he would obtain the fruit of (having donated) a thousand cows. O king, he should practice self-control on the Kālañjara mountain. The man is honoured in heaven. There is no doubt about it. Thence, O lord of people, having reached the river Mandākinī, that frees (people) from sins, on Citrakūṭa, the best of the mountains (he should bathe there). A man who bathes here and is engaged in worshipping manes and deities obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice, and goes to the best position (i.e. salvation).

57b-62a. O lord of kings, thence he should go to the excellent Guhasthāna, where god Mahāsena (i.e. Kārtikeya) is always present, O king. O best of men, a man attains perfection merely by going there. A man having bathed at Koṭitīrtha obtains the fruit of (presenting) a thousand cows. Turning right, a man should go to Yaśaḥsthāna. Having gone to Mahādeva, he shines like the moon. O best of the Bharatas, there is a well-known tank where, O Yudhiṣṭhira, the four oceans dwell. O lord of kings, a man having bathed and circumambulated there, and being restrained and purified would go to the best state (i.e. salvation).

62b-64a. O best of Kurus, thence he should go to the great Śṛṅgaverapura where formerly the very wise Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, crossed (the river). A man observing chastity and with his senses controlled, has his sins shaken off and obtains (the fruit of) a Vājapeya after bathing in Gaṅgā.

64b-100. Thence he should go to the place of the intelligent god. Having approached Mahādeva, and having worshipped him, and having circumambulated, O king, a man would become the chief of the attendants of Śiva. O lord of kings, a man should thence go to Prayāga which is extolled by the sages, where gods like Brahmā and others, the quarters with the lords of quarters, the regents of the quarters, siddhas, the devoted manes, sages led by Sanatkumāra, also nāgas, suparṇas, siddhas, celibates, rivers, oceans, gandharvas, celestial nymphs (stay),

and also the revered Viṣṇu led by Brahmā stays. There are three tanks. Among them (flows) Gaṅgā, honoured by the Holy Places and going beyond Prayāga. At that place, Yamunā, Sun's daughter, purifying the world, and well-known in the three worlds, has joined Gaṅgā. The buttocks of earth are said to be between Gaṅgā and Yamunā. The sages know Prayāga to be the end of the buttocks, i.e. the lap. Prayāga has Pratiṣṭhāna (so also) both Kambala and Aśvatara. Similarly the holy place Bhogavatī is the altar of Prajāpati. O Yudhiṣṭhira, there Vedas and sacrifices, being embodied, wait upon Prajāpati ; and the highly innocent sages and sovereigns offer sacrifices to gods, O king. O descendant of Bharata, there is nothing holier than that in the three worlds. O lord, Prayāga is superior to all holy places due to its glory. By hearing about that holy place, by mentioning its name, or by bowing (his) head (before it), a man is freed from all sins. He, of a severe vow, who bathes there at the confluence, obtains great religious merit of the Rājasūya and horse sacrifice. This is the place of sacrifices of the gods. The story about it (is) : O descendant of Bharata, whatever little is given there, becomes great. Even by the words of gods or of people, you should not disregard your thought of dying at Prayāga. There are ten thousand holy places, and others sixty crores in number, the presence of (all of) which is said to be here only, O descendant of Kuru. A man, who bathes at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, gets the same religious merit as accrues to one who has studied the four Vedas, or to those who speak the truth. Then there is the excellent holy place Bhogavatī of (i.e. sacred to) Vāsuki. He, who bathes there, would obtain (the fruit of) a horse sacrifice. There is the holy place (called) Haṁsaprapatana, well-known in the three worlds. There is also (the holy place called) Daśāśvamedhika on (the bank of) Gaṅgā, O descendant of Kuru. Here Gaṅgā has come down as at Kurukṣetra. A speciality is—at Kanakhala Prayāga becomes (a) great (holy place). If after doing a hundred bad deeds a man resorts to Gaṅgā, the water of Gaṅgā burns (i.e. removes) all those (sins) as fire burns fuel. The water of Gaṅgā burns (i.e. removes) all that as fire burns a heap of cotton. Every (holy place) is auspicious in Kṛtayuga ; Puṣkara is said to be so in Tretāyuga. Kurukṣetra is said

to be so in Dvāparayuga, and Gaṅgā in Kaliyuga. One should practice penance at Puṣkara and he should give a gift at Mahālaya. One should get onto (i.e. enter) fire at Malaya and anāśana(?)at Bhṛgutuṅga, and the water of Gaṅgā at Puṣkara, Kurukṣetra and the places in between (madhyageṣu ?). A creature (thus) instantly liberates seven preceding and seven succeeding (members of his family). Gaṅgā, by her (mere) mention purifies sins; by being seen gives merit; by bathing (in the stream) and drinking her water she purifies the family up to the seventh member. O king, as long as the bone of a man touches the water of Gaṅgā, the man is honoured in heaven. As (already) mentioned, having resorted to the auspicious places and holy places, a man, obtaining religious merit, becomes a resident of the other world. "There is no holy place like Gaṅgā, there is no god greater than Viṣṇu, there is none superior to brāhmaṇas." Thus spoke the Grandsire. That region, up to the limit of a yojana, where (i.e. through which) Gaṅgā flows, should be known as the region of siddhas (as) it has resorted to the bank of Gaṅgā. This is the truth in the minds of the twice-born and the good. A man should mutter (about) liberation into the ear of a viruous man or a follower. This is meritorious, this is pure, this leads to heaven, this gives happiness. This is the most holy, purifying, excellent way of life. This is the secret of the sages, which frees (a person) from all sins. Having studied in the midst of brāhmaṇas, he should secure purity. It is glorious, it leads to heaven, it is very meritorious, it puts an end to (one's) enemies, it is auspicious. The description of the multitude of holy places is the best producer of intelligence. A man having no son gets a son. A poor man would obtain wealth. A king conquers the earth. A vaiśya would obtain wealth. A śūdra obtains his desired objects, and a brāhmaṇa who recites (the Vedas) masters them. He who would daily listen to this meritorious (account of) the holy places, which is always pure, obtains the (faculty of) recollecting his former births and rejoices in heaven.

101-106. I have described the holy places that are accessible and that are inaccessible. With a desire to visit all the holy places a man should even go to them mentally. (Visits to) these were undertaken by Vasus, Sādhyas, Ādityas, Maruts, Aśvins,

sages like gods, desiring merit. O you descendant of Kuru, O you of a good vow, you too visit the holy places in this manner. Merit enhances by merit. The holy places are reached through piety and through the knowledge of the scriptures by the good people, whose senses are purified, and who follow the wise. A man who is not one who has not done (good) deeds, who is not foolish, who is not impure, who is not a thief, whose mind is not crooked (alone) bathes at the holy places, O descendant of Kuru. O dear one, you of a proper conduct, and always observing piety, have always gratified your manes and all paternal great-grandfathers, and all gods led by Brahmā and along with groups of sages.

Vasiṣṭha said:

107. You, O pious one, have always pleased (these) by means of your righteousness. On the earth you will obtain great, eternal fame like Dilīpa.

Nārada said:

108. Speaking thus and advising (Yudhiṣṭhira), the revered sage Vasiṣṭha, being pleased, disappeared there only with a pleased mind.

109-123. O best of the Kurus, by perceiving the truth of the sacred treatises and by the words of Vasiṣṭha, Dilīpa crossed the earth. O glorious one, the very meritorious pilgrimage, freeing one from all sins, is effective in (i.e. by visiting) Pratiṣṭhāna. He who wanders over the earth in this manner, enjoys after death the entire fruit of a hundred horse sacrifices. O king, you will obtain eight times the excellent merit which formerly king Dilīpa had secured, O son of Kuntī. Since you will lead the sages, you will have eightfold fruit. O descendant of Bharata, these sacred places are crowded with the hosts of demons. O descendant of Kuru, nobody except you can have an access (to these places). He who, getting up at daybreak, would recite this account of the divine sages, depending on all the holy places, is freed from all sins. The principal sages like Vālmīki and Kaśyapa, Ātreya and Kauṇḍinya, Viśvāmitra and Gautama, Asita and Devala, Mārkaṇḍeya and Gālava, also

Bharadvāja's disciple, sage Uddālaka, Śaunaka with his son, Vyāsa the best among the ascetics, the best sage Durvāsas, Jābāli of great penance—all these best sages, with penance as their wealth, deserve to be respected by you. O glorious one, with them go to these sacred places. You will obtain great fame like king Mahābhiṣa. O best among the Kurus, with your righteousness you shine like the pious Yayāti or like king Purūravas, like king Bhagīratha or like Rāma, who was well-known. As formerly (Indra), the killer of Vṛtra, and the king of gods, burnt (i.e. destroyed) all his enemies, and being free from distress, protected the three worlds, so you will protect your subjects after destroying your enemies. O lotus-eyed one, having obtained the earth secured by your good works, you will obtain fame like Kārtavīrya Arjuna.

Sūta said:

124-127. Having spoken like this, and having advised holy great king, the revered sage Nārada disappeared there only. The lord of the earth, Yudhiṣṭhira, of a good vow, respectfully visited along with the sages all the sacred places. O all sages, he who would recite or listen to the account about the pilgrimage told by me, becomes free from all sins. I have told you the entire fact. What more do you want to hear ? There is nothing that cannot be told by me about the sages of pious fame.

CHAPTER FORTY

Mārkaṇḍeya Recommends Pilgrimage to Prayāga

Sūta said:

1-5. O you of good vows, I have thus described the holy places, the bodies of Viṣṇu. A man becomes liberated by contact with any one of these. To hear about the holy places is blessed; to resort to the holy places is blessed. In Kaliyuga, there is no other means for destroying the heap of sins. He who

everyday says, 'I will stay at a holy place; I will bathe at a holy place', goes to the highest principle. By his merely talking about the holy places his sins perish. O you of best vows, the holy places resorted to by the blessed ones are indeed blessed. By resorting to the holy place only, Nārāyaṇa, the author of the world is worshipped. There is no higher place than the holy places.

6-11. Men should always without fail worship a brāhmaṇa, tulasī (-plant), aśvattha, collection of holy places, and the greatest lord Viṣṇu. O best sages, the seniors look upon worshipping the brāhmaṇas especially as superior to bathing at all the sacred places. Therefore, a wise man should everyday resort to the auspicious feet of a brāhmaṇa, which are full of all sacred places. They are superior to holy places. One should circumambulate aśvattha (tree), tulasī (plant) and cows. Obtaining the fruit of (visiting) all holy places he is honoured in Viṣṇu's world. Therefore, a man should destroy (the fruits of) his evil deeds by resorting to a holy place. Otherwise he goes to hell and becomes calm only after exhausting (the fruits of) his acts. Sinners live in hell. A meritorious person obtains (i.e. goes to) heaven. Therefore, a wise man should resort to an auspicious, holy place.

The sages said:

12-13. O you of a good vow, we have heard about the holy places along with their greatness. Now we desire to hear the distinguishing features of Prayāga. O Sūta, since you formerly described Prayāga in brief, (now) we desire to hear about it in detail. O Sūta, please describe it to us.

Sūta said:

14-30. O illustrious ones of good vows, you have well asked about Prayāga. I shall gladly give you a description of Prayāga, which was formerly narrated by Mārkaṇḍeya to the son of Pāṇḍu. When the Bhārata (war) was over, and Pṛthā's son (i.e. Yudhiṣṭhira) had obtained the kingdom, for some time, king Yudhiṣṭhira, Kuntī's son, was tormented by the grief (i.e. the bereavement) of his (cousin-) brothers, and thought again and

again: 'King Duryodhana was the lord of eleven divisions of the army. All those (Kauravas), having frequently tormented us, are dead. (We) the five Pāṇḍavas, having resorted to Vāsudeva (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), have survived. (How did we kill) Droṇa, Bhīṣma, very mighty Karṇa, and king Duryodhana with his brothers and sons? All the kings, thinking themselves to be brave, have been killed. What is the use of the pleasures or of life without the kingdom? Alas, (what a misery) !' Thinking likethis the king was distressed. Motionless and devoid of energy he remained with his face a little bent down. When the king regained consciousness, he repeatedly thought: 'Which course or vow should I practice? or which sacred place—bathing where a man goes to the world of Viṣṇu (should I resort to) by which I shall be free from the blemish due to the great sin (of killing my kinsmen)? How shall I ask Kṛṣṇa who got the great thing done? How shall I ask Dhṛtarāṣṭra whose hundred sons are killed? How shall I ask Vyāsa whose family has met with destruction?' In this way Dharma's son Yudhiṣṭhira was distressed. All the (other) Pāṇḍavas wept due to being distressed by the grief of their brother. The noble ones who had resorted to the Pāṇḍavas and who had gathered there also (wept). Kuntī, Draupadī and others that had gathered there, fell on the ground on all sides and wept. Mārkaṇḍa was at Vārāṇasī. He came to know that Yudhiṣṭhira was distressed, weeping and very unhappy. In a very short time Mārkaṇḍa of great penance reached Hastināpura, and stood at the gate of the royal palace. The doorkeeper too, having seen him, quickly reported (his arrival) to the king. "The sage Mārkaṇḍa, desiring to see you, stands at the gate." The son of Dharma (i.e. Yudhiṣṭhira) quickly came to the door, and eagerly said:

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

31-33a. Welcome to you, O you highly intelligent one. Welcome to you, O great sage. Today my existence is fruitful. Today my family is purified. O great sage, when you are seen today, my dead ancestors are gratified.

Having seated him on the throne, the noble Yudhiṣṭhira honoured that sage with (giving water for) washing his feet, for purifying himself, and by offering worship to him.

33b-34. Then Mārkaṇḍa said to him: "O lord, I am honoured by you. O king, tell me quickly why you hastened. Tell me why you are distressed."

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

35. O great sage, knowing what occurred to us for (securing) the kingdom the holy one has come here.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

36-38. O king, of mighty arms, hear. Where Dharma (i.e. righteousness) is well-settled there no sin is seen in the case of a wise man resorting to fighting on the battlefield, especially in the case of a kṣatriya (fighting) in accordance with his duty? Bearing this in mind, you should not think (that you have committed) a sin.

Then king Yudhiṣṭhira, saluting the sage by (bowing down) his head (said): "O sage, I am asking you who always (directly) see the three times. Tell me in brief (that) by which I shall be free from the blemish."

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

39-40. O illustrious king listen, since you ask me. Thus Sāṁkhya, Yoga, and the sacred places have been narrated; O lord, again the holy brāhmaṇas have formerly declared that going to Prayāga is best for men doing righteous deeds.

CHAPTER FORTYONE

The Greatness of Prayāga

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-2. O revered sir, I desire to hear how in the former kalpa men went there to Prayāga. What is the course of (i.e. for) the dead there? What is the fruit which those who bathe there get?

Tell me also the fruit which those who stay in Prayāga get. Tell me all this. I have great curiosity.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

3-22. O lord, O dear, I shall tell you what is desirable, and what is (its) fruit, which I heard while being told to brāhmaṇas and sages in olden days. From Prayāga, Pratiṣṭhāna, up to Dharmakī Vāsukī pool, there are the two nāgas. This is the region of (i.e. sacred to) Prajāpati, which is known in the three worlds. Having bathed here men go to heaven. Those that die here are not reborn. There gods like Brahmā, having come together protect (everything). There are many other holy places which destroy all sins. O king, it is not possible to describe them even by (spending) many hundred years. I shall give you the description of Prayāga in brief. Sixty thousand bows protect the Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā). The Sun with the seven horses always protects Yamunā. Indra himself particularly protects Prayāga. Viṣṇu, along with the gods, protects the highly esteemed region. Maheśvara (i.e. Śiva), with the trident in his hand, always protects that (famous) Vaṭa. The god protects the auspicious place which removes all sins. Men given to impiety do not go to that place. O king, all that sin—small or smaller—of a man who remembers Prayāga vanishes. A man, merely by seeing that holy place, or even by uttering its name, or even by taking clay from there, is free from sin. O lord of kings, there are five pools in (i.e. through) which Gaṅgā (flows). The sin of a man goes away the moment he enters Prayāga. A man who remembers Gaṅgā within a distance of thousands of yojanas, gets the highest position (i.e. salvation), even if he is a man of wicked deeds. By reciting (the name of Gaṅgā) a man is free from sins. By seeing (her) he sees (i.e. gets) happiness. By bathing in and drinking (the water of Gaṅgā) he purifies his family up to the seventh (descendant). A man who is truthful, who has conquered his anger, who has greatly resorted to harmlessness, who follows the proper course of conduct, who knows the truth, who is engaged in the well-being of cows and brāhmaṇas, is freed from sin after bathing in between (i.e. at the confluence of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā. He properly obtains many objects that he has thought of in his mind. Thence having gone to Prayāga, he

should live there with restraint for a month and should offer oblations to gods. (Thereby) he gets his desired objects and is everywhere born in a high family. God Maheśvara is always actually present where the illustrious goddess Yamunā, the daughter of the Sun, well-known in the three worlds, goes. O Yudhiṣṭhira, the auspicious Prayāga is difficult to be reached by human beings. O lord of kings, having bathed there, gods, demons, gandharvas, sages, siddhas and cāraṇas, are honoured in heaven.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

Importance of Giving a Cow at Prayāga

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1-24. O king, hear again the greatness of Prayāga, going where, a man is freed from all sins. There is no doubt about it. Except Prayāga, there is absolutely no eternal place for the afflicted and the poor who are of a firm resolve. A man who having reached the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, would cast his life, goes in an aeroplane having the colour of heated gold and resembling the sun, (and) rejoices in heaven in the company of gandharvas and celestial nymphs. The best sages say that (such) a man obtains desired objects. He rejoices with all auspicious things, divine and full of gems, is accompanied by various flags and surrounded by excellent damsels. He when asleep is awakened by the sound of songs and musical instruments. As long as he does not call to mind (his earthly) existence (or life), he is honoured in heaven. Then deprived of heaven, having fallen from there due to the (fruit of) his deeds being exhausted, he is born in a rich family full of (i.e. accomplished with) gold and gems. He recollects that holy place, and merely by remembering it he goes there. The best sages say that a man, being in a region or in a forest or in a foreign country, or in his own house, who would cast his life (there) by just remembering

Prayāga, obtains (i.e. goes to) Brahmā's world, where the golden land is full of all desired objects, and to which world the seers and sages go. Due to the deeds done by him in this world a man rejoices along with the sages on the charming, auspicious bank of Mandākinī crowded with thousands of women. In heaven he is honoured by siddhas, cāraṇas, gandharvas and deities. Then fallen from heaven, he would be a lord in Jambudvīpa. Then repeatedly thinking about auspicious deeds, he undoubtedly becomes virtuous and endowed with wealth in this world. He who is well-settled in truthfulness by deeds, speech and mind, and gives gifts in between (the region of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā (gets liberation). He, who accepts gold, jewels, pearls or grains at his own rite or in honour of the manes, or in the worship of deities, has his visit to the holy places rendered fruitless as long as he gets the fruit of that (i.e. accepting gifts). Thus a man should not accept (gifts) at a holy place and a sanctuary. A twice-born should be careful about all omens. He who gives a tawny, red-coloured, golden-horned, silver-hoofed milch-cow with a piece of cloth round her neck (to a brāhmaṇa) at Prayāga (gets liberation). Having properly secured at Prayāga a learned, good, tranquil, pious brāhmaṇa, master of the Vedas, and wearing white garments, that cow should be given to him at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā. Costly garments, various jewels (should also be given). The man (who gives such a gift) is honoured in heaven for as many thousand years as there is hair on the limbs of the cow, O best one. The cow is born there where he is born. Due to that act he does not see (i.e. go to) horrible hell. Having reached Uttara Kuru, he rejoices for an inexhaustible period. (Instead of giving) hundreds and thousands of bulls he should give one milch-cow. One cow would liberate sons, wife and servants. Therefore, of all gifts, the gift of a cow is the best. In a terrible, insurmountable difficulty due to a horrible sin, a cow alone protects (a man). Therefore (a cow) should be given to a brāhmaṇa.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

The Fruit of Visiting Prayāga

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O sage, as you have narrated the greatness of Prayāga, I am undoubtedly being freed from sins.

2. O revered one, in what manner should people of religious resolve go (there)? O great sage, tell me about the rite which is declared (to be performed) at Prayāga.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

3-27. O dear, I shall tell you the entire sequence of the religious rites to be performed during the pilgrimage. O best of Kurus, I will tell you the fruit accruing to him who mounted upon a bull goes to Prayāga united with gods. Due to the anger of bull he lives in a terrible hell. From such a man his dead ancestors do not accept water (offered by him); but he who would bathe his sons and all children and would make them drink (water at the holy place) like himself and would cause gifts to be given to brāhmaṇas (is liberated). A man who, due to his desire for (showing off) his affluence or to delusion, would go (to a holy place) in a vehicle, his (visit to the) holy place is fruitless. Therefore, a man should avoid (going in) a vehicle. He who (in the region) between Gaṅgā and Yamunā, gives his daughter (in marriage) according to the Ārṣa form of marriage and according to his wealth, does not see (i.e. go to) a terrible hell due to that deed. Having gone to Uttara Kuru he rejoices for an inexhaustible period. He obtains sons and wife that are pious and endowed with righteousness. There he should give gifts in accordance with his wealth. There is no doubt that due to the fruit of (the visit to) the holy place only, he prospers. O lord of kings, he stays in heaven till deluge. He who having resorted to the root of the Vaṭa (tree), would cast his life, goes to Rudra's world after having crossed all (other) worlds. There the twelve suns resorting to Rudra shine. They completely burn the entire world. (Only) the root of the Vaṭa (tree), where, when the world is (but) one ocean, when the moon, the sun, and the wind have perished, Viṣṇu born again and again, sleeps, is not burnt. Gods, demons,

gandharvas, sages, siddhas, cāraṇas always resort to that holy place on the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā. O lord of kings, they go there. It is united with Prayāga. There gods like Brahmā, quarters and lords of quarters, regents of quarters, sādhyas, the manes liked by people, and also great sages led by Sanatkumāra, and other brāhmaṇic sages like Aṅgiras, also nāgas, siddhas, suparṇas, those moving in the sky, rivers, oceans, mountains, nāgas and also vidyādharas (stay). The revered Viṣṇu led by Prajāpati (i.e. Brahmā) also stays there. O best of kings, Prayāga well-known in the three worlds and (lying) between Gaṅgā and Yamunā is said to be the hip and the loin of the earth. O descendant of Bharata, there is nothing more sacred than it in the three worlds. By hearing (the description) of that holy place, even by mentioning its name, or securing the clay from that place, a man is freed from sins. He who, of a severe vow, bathes there at the confluence, obtains the same fruit as Rājasūya and Aśvamedha (sacrifices) (give). O dear one, even you should not change your mind to go to Prayāga even by (i.e. depending upon) the words of the Vedas, or of the people. O descendant of Kuru, the presence of ten thousand holy places and sixty crore others is here only. He who casts his life at the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā follows the same course, as a wise man endowed with abstract meditation and born of good parents follows. O Yudhiṣṭhira, those who have not visited Prayāga, well-known in the three worlds, do not (really) live in the world. Thus seeing that holy place—the highest place—Prayāga, a man is free from all sins as the Moon is from Rāhu.

28-46a. On the right bank of Yamunā, there are the two Nāgas, Kambala and Aśvatara. By bathing there and drinking (water) there, a man is freed from all sins. Having gone to that (holy) place of the wise Mahādeva, a man liberates ten preceding and ten succeeding (generations). Having bathed there, the man would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. He obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven till deluge. O descendant of Bharata, in the eastern side of Gaṅgā, in the ocean there is a pool (known as) Pratiṣṭhāna, well-known in the three worlds. If a chaste man, with his anger controlled, lives there for three nights, he is freed from all sins, and would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. To the north of Pratiṣṭhāna, and to the east of Bhāgīrathī, there is

the holy place (called) Haṁsaprapatana, well-known in the three worlds. O descendant of Bharata, a man, merely by bathing there, gets the fruit of a horse sacrifice. He is honoured in heaven as long as the moon and the sun (last). A man free from jealousy, who would offer oblations of water to his dead ancestors at the large sandy bank called Urvaśīpulina, white like swans, enjoys heaven with manes, O king, for sixty hundred years. There he is always worshipped by sages, gandharvas and kinnaras. Then having been deprived of heaven and having fallen from there due to the exhaustion of (the fruit of) his acts, he obtains a hundred maidens like Urvaśī. O king, he becomes an enjoyer (i.e. a master) of a hundred thousand cows. He is awakened by the sound of a girdle and anklets. Having enjoyed many pleasures, he gets (i.e. goes) to that holy place again. He who has the seat of the Kuśa grass, who is always restrained and has his senses controlled, would become master of pleasures by eating once a day for a month (at the holy place). He obtains a hundred women adorned with (ornaments of) gold. He would also be the great master of pleasures on the earth up to the ocean. He, the king, becomes the enjoyer of ten thousand villages. Possessing wealth and grains he is always a donor. Having enjoyed many pleasures he again remembers that holy place. A chaste man with his senses conquered and endowed with abstract meditation, having fasted at that charming Vaṭa, would obtain the knowledge of Brahman. He who having secured a holy bath, would cast his life, is honoured in heaven for a crore years. Then deprived of heaven, and dropped from there due to the exhaustion of (the fruit of) his acts, he is born as a handsome (child) in a family rich with gold, jewels and pearls.

46b-57. Thence he should go to Bhogavatī, to the north of Vāsukī. There is another great holy place called Daśāśvamedhaka. Having bathed there a man would obtain the fruit of a horse sacrifice. He becomes rich with wealth, handsome and diligent. By merely going there he would obtain that religious merit which is there in (i.e. which is obtained by the recital of) the four Vedas, which is the fruit in (i.e. obtained by) those who speak the truth, and the piety that exists in harmlessness. Gaṅgā is like Kurukṣetra wherever a bath is taken in her (stream). She has tenfold virtue of Kurukṣetra (at a place) where she is joined

by Sindhu. That place where the glorious Gaṅgā, having many sacred places and the wealth of penance (flows) should be known as a perfect (holy place). No doubt should be raised about it. She liberates the mortals on the earth, nāgas below, and she liberates gods in heaven. Therefore she is said to be Tripathagā (i.e. flowing in three streams). As long as the bones of a man remain in Gaṅgā, till that time—for thousands of years—he is honoured in heaven. She is the greatest holy place among places, and the best river among rivers. She gives salvation to all creatures, even to great sinners. Gaṅgā is easily accessible everywhere. She is inaccessible at three places: at Gaṅgādvāra, Prayāga and at the confluence of Gagṅā and the ocean. Those, who, having bathed there, go to heaven, are not reborn. There is no other recourse like Gaṅgā for all beings whose minds are smitten with sins and who desire a refuge. She who is the (most) pure of the pure (objects), the most auspicious of the auspicious (objects), has fallen from the head of Śiva, removes all sins, and is holy.

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

The Fruit of Bathing in the Confluence at Prayāga

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1-20a. O king, hear again the greatness of Prayāga, having heard which a man is freed from all sins. There is no doubt about it. That (famous) Mānasa lake is on the left bank of Gaṅgā. Having fasted (there) for three nights a man would obtain all his desired objects. A man obtains that fruit when he remembers the holy place, which he would obtain by giving a cow, land, or gold. A man who, with or without a desire, dies in Gaṅgā, lives in heaven after death, and does not see (i.e. go to) hell. He is awakened by the music of that host of celestial nymphs from his sleep. He goes in an aeroplane to which swans and cranes are yoked. O lord of kings, he enjoys for many years—six thousand years. Then being deprived of

heaven and having fallen from there due to (the fruit of) his acts being exhausted, he is born in a family rich with gold, jewels and pearls. There are sixty thousand sixty hundred holy places. They go to the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā in the month of Māgha. That fruit which one gets by properly giving away a thousand cows is had by bathing for three days at Prayāga in the month of Māgha. He who would practise the vow of the five fires between (i.e. at the confluence of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā, is defectless in limbs, is free from diseases and has the five senses (intact). For as many thousand years as the number of pores of hair are there on his body, he is honoured in heaven. Then having fallen from heaven he would be the lord of Jambudvīpa. The man enjoying many pleasures resorts to that holy place. He who would enter water at the confluence well-known in the world, is freed from all sins as the Moon eclipsed by Rāhu (becomes free). He obtains (i.e. goes to) the world of Soma and rejoices with Soma. Being served by sages and gandharvas he obtains (i.e. lives in) heaven for sixty thousand sixty hundred years. Fallen (from there) he is born in an affluent family. The man who with his head down and feet up would drink (i.e. take in) the flame, is honoured for a hundred thousand years in heaven. Having fallen from there, O lord of kings, he becomes a performer of agnihotra. Having enjoyed many pleasures, the man resorts to that holy place. He who cuts off his body and offers (the pieces of) it to the birds (is honoured in heaven). Hear the fruit of him (i.e. which he gets), who (i.e. whose body) is enjoyed by birds. For a hundred thousand years he is honoured in the world of Soma. Then having fallen from heaven he becomes (i.e. is born as) a pious, virtuous, handsome, learned king, having a very lovable body. Having enjoyed many pleasures, he again resorts to that holy place.

20b-22. On the left bank of Yamunā, and to the south of Prayāga, there is said to be a very holy place (called) Ṛṇapramocana. Staying there for a night, he is free from all debts. He obtains (i.e. goes to) the world of the Sun, and would always be free from debt.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

Agnitīrtha, Virañjana, Svargatīrtha etc.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. Having heard this description of Prayāga which you have given, my heart has become very pure. O revered Sir, tell me what kind of fruit (a man gets) by fasting.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

2-4. O king, O lord, listen to the fruit of fasting which a wise man who has faith, obtains. He becomes one who has no defect in any limb, is free from diseases, and endowed with (i.e. has his) five senses (intact). When he walks, at every step he gets the fruit of a horse sacrifice. O king, he liberates his ten predecessors and ten successors in the family. He is freed from all sins and would go to the highest position.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

5-6. O pious one, you are illustrious. O lord, (please) tell me (about) gifts. By small, but the best (gift) a man would obtain many virtues (i.e. much religious merit). In this world a man gets (an opportunity to perform) the horse sacrifice due to great religious merit. Please remove this doubt of mine. I have a great curiosity.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

7-10. O king, O great hero, listen to what formerly Brahmā told in the presence of (i.e. to) the sages, which I heard when it was being told. The region of Prayāga is five yojanas extensive. He who enters that region, has (performed) the horse sacrifice at every step. A man who would cast his life (there), liberates all the seven predecessors and fourteen successors of his. Knowing like this, O lord of kings, a man should be full of faith. Men who have no faith and whose hearts are smitten with sins, do not obtain (i.e. reach) the (holy) place Prayāga, fashioned by gods.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

11-12. How would they who through affection, or through greed for wealth have gone under the sway of lust, obtain the fruit of (visiting) a holy place, and how would they obtain religious merit ? O great sage, tell (me) what position will he who not knowing what ought and what ought not to be done, sells all (kinds of) wares, have at Prayāga.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

13-19. O king, listen to the great secret which destroys all sins. O lord of kings, it is told by the self-born god (i.e. Brahmā) that a man who with his senses controlled lives in Prayāga for a month, is freed from all sins. He, being pure and controlled, being harmless and endowed with faith, is freed from all sins, and would go to the highest position (i.e. salvation). Listen to the fruit that those who murder those who confide in them, get at Prayāga. He should bathe three times a day; he should eat what is obtained by begging. There is no doubt that after three months he is liberated from Prayāga. He who would go on a pilgrimage knowingly, being endowed with all desired objects, is honoured in heaven. He secures a place which is full of wealth and grains. Thus perfect with knowledge he enjoys pleasures. He has liberated (i.e. he liberates) his manes and great-grandfathers from hell. O you who know the essential principle, I have told you, who are again and again asking me piously, the ancient secret for your good.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

20. Today my existence is fruitful. Today my family is successful. Today, just by seeing you, I am pleased, I am favoured. O religious-minded one, merely by seeing you, I am freed from all sins.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

21. Fortunately your existence is fruitful. Fortunately you have liberated your family. By narrating (the description of a holy place etc.) religious merit enhances. Hearing it destroys sins.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

22. O great sage, tell me about the religious merit (obtained by bathing) in Yamunā. Tell me all this as you have seen and heard.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

23-26. (The place) where Yamunā, the illustrious goddess, the daughter of the Sun, and well-known in the three worlds, has come (is holy). Yamunā goes (i.e. flows) along the same course as Gaṅgā has flowed out. Merely by mentioning her (name) within (a distance of) thousands of yojanas she destroys sins. Having bathed in that Yamunā and having drunk (her water), (and) by mentioning (her name) a man obtains religious merit, and by seeing her he sees (i.e. gets) good fortune. When (a man) bathes (in her stream) and drinks (her water), she purifies the family up to the seventh (descendant). He who casts his life there, goes to the highest position (i.e. salvation).

27-32a. On the right bank of Yamunā, there is (a holy place) called Agnitīrtha. To the west is the holy place of Dharmarāja known as Haravara. Having bathed there men go to heaven. Those who die there are not reborn. Thus there are thousands of holy places on the right bank of Yamunā. I shall tell you (about those that are situated) on the left (bank). Of the magnanimous Āditya the holy place is Virañjana, where, O Yudhiṣṭhira, gods along with Indra, always offer the daily prayer. Gods and other wise men resort to that holy place. Having great faith take a bath at the holy place. There are many other holy places. All remove sins and are auspicious. Having bathed there men go to heaven. Those who die there, are not reborn.

32b-36. The fruits of both Gaṅgā and Yamunā are equal. Gaṅgā is worshipped everywhere merely by her being senior. Thus, O son of Kuntī, have a bath at Svargatīrtha. Just at that moment (when a man bathes there), the sin committed by him during his life, perishes. He who getting up at daybreak recites or listens to (the description of the holy place), is freed from all sins, and goes to heaven.

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

More about Merits Derived from Pilgrimage

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1-5. I have heard what Brahmā told and what gives religious merit, in the Purāṇa. There are thousands and hundreds and millions of holy places. All these are auspicious and pure and (are) said (to lead to) the highest position. Naimiṣa is meritorious on the earth and Puṣkara in the Intermediate Space; so also is Prayāga for the people, and Kurukṣetra also excels. How do you praise one (only) leaving all (others) ? This is said to be unauthoritative, unbelievable and not good. How do you speak approvingly of divine and highest position, and pleasures as desired, and great merit through little yoga ? Tell me about (i.e. remove) this doubt of mine according as you have seen and heard.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

6-14a. What is unbelievable should not be told. It may be actually seen by a man having faith (but) with his mind smitten with sin. One who has no faith, one who is impure, one who has given up auspicious practices—all these are sinners. Therefore I spoke (like) this. Listen to (the description of) the greatness of Prayāga, as seen and heard about (by me). There will be (i.e. it will contain) what is seen and not seen and any other possible facts, O king, which I formerly saw or heard about. One's application (or path) is honoured (only) after regarding the sacred texts as authoritative. There (i.e. while doing so) (if) someone else is afflicted, one should not have (recourse to) such a path. Men obtain (the right) path after thousands of births, since by a thousand applications men obtain the (right) path. He who gives all jewels to brāhmaṇas (obtains yoga), (for) by that gift given (to brāhmaṇas), men obtain application. All this happens in the case of him who dies at Prayāga, and not otherwise. I shall tell principally to them who have faith, O descendant of Bharata. Since it is seen in all beings, everywhere, Brahman is not something which can be described.

14b-18a. As Brahman is worshipped among all beings everywhere, in the same way Prayāga is worshipped by the wise in all the worlds. (It) is worshipped (like this). O Yudhiṣṭhira, this is the truth about the lord of holy places. Even Brahmā always remembers Prayāga, the best holy place. Having reached (this) lord of the holy places he does not desire anything else. Who, having obtained godhead, desires manhood? From this inference only, O Yudhiṣṭhira, you will know whether I have told you what is meritorious or non-meritorious.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

18b-19a. I have heard what you told. I am repeatedly amazed. How can it be attained by yoga and heaven by (one's) acts? He gets pleasures and (comes to) the earth as the fruit of (certain) acts. I am asking about those acts due to which he again gets (i.e. comes to) the earth.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

19b-26. O king, hear by which acts (he comes to) the earth. O king, such men as censure a cow, fire, brāhmaṇa, sacred texts, gold, water, women, mother, father, do not have an upward going. Thus spoke Prajāpati. Thus yoga is had. The (highest) place is very difficult to obtain. The men who commit sins go to terrible hell. Those who first take away an elephant, a horse, a cow, a bull, jewels, pearls, gold in the absence (of the owner), and later give gifts, do not go to heaven, where the donors enjoying pleasures (live). The mean ones united with (i.e. doing) such acts are roasted in hell. Thus O Yudhiṣṭhira, (I have told about) yoga, pious acts and a donor. Whether it is true or not, or whether its fruit is there or not, I shall offer the explanation, so that he can on his own obtain (them).

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

Prayāga Again

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

1-5. O king, hear again (about) the greatness of Prayāga. There are many holy places and other auspicious mountains like Naimiṣa, Puṣkara, Gotīrtha, Sindhusāgara, Kurukṣetra, Gayā, and Gaṅgāsāgara. The wise say that ten thousand holy places and thirty crore others are always situated at Prayāga. There are three fire-vessels, from which Gaṅgā, led by all (other) holy places has set out from Prayāga. The goddess (Yamunā), the daughter of the Sun is well-known in the three worlds. Gaṅgā causing people to enjoy, stays (here) with Yamunā.

6-11. Prayāga, said to be the hip of the earth, is in between (i.e. at the confluence of) Gaṅgā and Yamunā. The thirty and a half crores which Vāyu has proclaimed, do not deserve (i.e. are not equal to) even its sixteenth part. Whatever is in heaven, on the earth (or) in the atmosphere—all that is said to be Gaṅgā (only). Prayāga, Samādhisthāna, the two (nāgas) Kambala and Aśvatara, and the (holy place) which is (called) Bhogavatī, are the altar of Prajāpati. O Yudhiṣṭhira, gods and sacrifices are there in an embodied form. The sages having penance as their wealth, worship Prayāga. Gods and kings having much wealth, perform sacrifices (there). None is more auspicious than that in the three worlds, O descendant of Bharata. Due to its prowess, it is more powerful than all (other) holy places, O lord. There are ten thousand holy places and thirty crore other holy places.

12-20. The truth is, that place where the illustrious Gaṅgā is (flowing) is a penance-grove. That (region) which resorts to the bank of Gaṅgā, should be known as the land of siddhas. A man should whisper this into the ears of the twice-born, the good, his own son, friends, or the disciple who follows him. This is blessed, this leads to heaven, this should be practised, this is auspicious, this is meritorious, this is charming, this is holy, this is the best course of conduct. This is the secret of the sages, which destroys all sins. A brāhmaṇa, meditating on it and having remembered it would obtain purity. He who, always being pure

hears about this holy place everyday, obtains (the faculty) of remembering his former briths and rejoices in heaven. These holy places are reached by the good who follow the desires of the wise. O descendant of Kuru, bathe at the holy places. Do not have a crooked mind. Being asked by you, I have properly told it to you. All the manes and the great-grandsires that are liberated do not deserve (i.e. are not equal to) (even) the sixteenth part of Prayāga. Thus the (path of) knowledge and (that of) yoga and a holy place, O Yudhiṣṭhira, are secured after great trouble. Then they go to the highest position. People by remembering Prayāga go to heaven.

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva Dwell in Prayāga

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

1. O great sage, you have told me all this account of Prayāga. Similarly tell me everything so that it would liberate me.

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

2-7. O king, listen, I shall explain: This whole world is said to be Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Īśāna, the immutable lord of the deities. Brahmā creates the creatures and whatever is immobile and mobile. The highest Viṣṇu protects them, the created beings, in the world. At the end of a kalpa Rudra destroys the entire world. He neither gives, nor does he accept, and never perishes. He who sees him (to be) the lord of all beings, (indeed) perceives. Now Brahmā is at the north of Pratiṣṭhāna. The highest lord being Maheśvara, remains at Vaṭa. The gods with gandharvas, siddhas and great sages always take care of the highest one. Those who are bent on doing sinful deeds and others (like them) who are (there), do not obtain the highest position.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

8. You have told me properly as to what is heard about them. For what reason, do these, dear to the world, remain (here)?

Mārkaṇḍeya said:

9-15. These viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara (i.e. Śiva) live at Prayāga. I shall tell you the reason. Listen to the fact, O Yudhiṣṭhira. The region of Prayāga is five yojanas extensive. They, who remove sinful deeds, live (there) for protecting (the region). Even the slightest sin (committed) in that the (region) will cause (a man) to fall into hell. Thus, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, along with Śiva (live) at Prayāga. The seven islands, oceans, mountains, supported (by them) remain on the earth, till deluge, O Yudhiṣṭhira, all the other many (objects) that are (there) (in fact everything) beginning with the earth is fashioned by these three deities. This is a holy place of Prajāpati; and is well-known as Prayāga. O Yudhiṣṭhira, this Prayāga is meritorious and auspicious. Rule your kingdom, O lord of kings. Be with your brothers.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

Kṛṣṇa Recommends Pilgrimage to Prayāga

Sūta said:

1-3. All the Pāṇḍavas bent upon meritorious acts, along with their brothers, saluted the brāhmaṇas and offered oblations to their (dead) elders and deities. Kṛṣṇa also at that time came there in a moment. All the Pāṇḍavas together honoured that Mādhava (i.e. Kṛṣṇa). All the noble ones, along with Kṛṣṇa, consecrated Yudhiṣṭhira, Dharma's son, on the kingdom (i.e. the throne).

4. In the meanwhile (i.e. at this time) only, the great-souled Mārkaṇḍeya, then saying: 'May it be well with you', came in a moment to the hermitage.

5. The pious Yudhiṣṭhira, Dharma's son, too, along with his brothers, gave him a great gift.

6. He who, getting up at daybreak, recites or listens to this, is freed from all sins and he goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

Vāsudeva said:

7-17. Do my words (i.e. as I tell you). I am speaking out of affection for you. Being free from affliction at Prayāga, be always engaged in (performing) sacrifices. O lord of kings, O Yudhiṣṭhira, ever remembering Prayāga along with us, you yourself will obtain the eternal heaven. The man who goes to Prayāga, (and) who lives (there), with his soul being purified of all sins, goes to heaven. He who has turned away from accepting gifts, who is pleased, controlled and pure, who is free from self-conceit, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a holy place. O lord of kings, so also he who does not get angry, who speaks the truth, and who has a firm resolve, who looks upon (other) beings as himself, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) a holy place. The sages, so also the gods have recommended sacrifices according to (proper) order. O king, a poor man cannot (afford) to have (i.e. to perform) a sacrifice. A sacrifice requires many implements, and many activities for its preparation are necessary. It is sometimes obtained (i.e. performed) by various rich or wealthy men. O king, it can be performed by rich, wise men. Then they are united with (i.e. attain) meritorious fruits of the sacrifice. O king, O best of the Bharatas, understand this great secret of the sages. Visiting holy places is meritorious. It is even superior to (the performance of) sacrifices. O best of men, ten crores of holy places, so also thirty crores of other (holy places) will go to (i.e. exist) in Gaṅgā in the month of Māgha. Enjoying the kingdom free from vexation, be comfortable, O great king. O lord of kings, you will, especially as a sacrificer, again see (me).

CHAPTER FIFTY

Viṣṇu's Name the Greatest Holy Place

The sages said:

1-3a. You have told (i.e. explained) all that was asked. Now also we (want to) ask one (thing only). O you very intelligent one, (please) tell it. O you who know everything, tell us what fruit a man would obtain by resorting to these holy places. So also tell us by doing which one act (the fruit of visiting) all (these holy places) is had; tell us if there is such an act.

Sūta said:

3b-4a. O illustrious ones, formerly, beginning with the brāhmaṇa (caste), the worldly and religious rites of various kinds for the castes were prescribed. Only one is superior.

4b-17a. There is no doubt that one who has devotion to Viṣṇu, has undoubtedly conquered (everything). Hari, the lord of the lord of all gods, should alone be propitiated. The goblin of sin would perish by means of the great sacred hymns in the form of the (various) names of Viṣṇu. There is no doubt that those with pure hearts, going round Viṣṇu even once, get (the fruit of) having bathed at all holy places. A man would obtain the fruit of (having visited) all holy places by seeing Viṣṇu's image. Muttering the excellent name of Viṣṇu a man would obtain (the fruit) of having muttered all sacred hymns. A man, having smelt tulasī, the grace of Viṣṇu, does not see, O best brāhmaṇas, the huge and terrible face of Yama. A man, having (but) once saluted Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) does not drink the mother's milk (i.e. is not reborn). I always repeatedly salute them whose mind is (fixed) in the feet of Viṣṇu. Even pulkasas, cāṇḍālas or other mlecha tribes, who serve the feet of Viṣṇu alone are fit to be saluted. Then what about meritorious and devoted brāhmaṇas and royal sages? Having put devotion unto (i.e. being devoted to) Viṣṇu, a man does not see (i.e. experience) confinement in the womb (i.e. is not reborn). O brāhmaṇas, a man who with high sounds (i.e. loudly) utters the name of Viṣṇu, purifies the world as does the water of Gaṅgā etc. There is no doubt that a

man is freed from sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa by seeing (the image of), touching (the feet of), reciting (the name of) and devotion (to Viṣṇu). Circumambulating (the idol of) Hari, and loudly uttering his names in a sweet and melodious voice accompanied with clapping of the hands, a man has struck the sin of murder of a brāhmaṇa etc. (off) his hands. A man becomes pure by just seeing him who having narrated his story, would listen to a narrative about him. Then, O best sages, how can there be the slightest doubt about his sins?

17b-39. O great sages, Viṣṇu's name is the best holy place of all the holy places. Those who have uttered the name of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) make the (entire) world a holy place. Therefore, O best sages, they consider nothing more meritorious than this. A man using (i.e. who uses) and holding (i.e. who holds) on his head the remains of an offering of flowers to Viṣṇu, would just become Viṣṇu, the destroyer of grief due to Yama. Undoubtedly Viṣṇu (alone) is to be worshipped and saluted. Those who look upon the great Viṣṇu and the unmanifest Maheśvara as identical, have no rebirth. Therefore, see and worship Viṣṇu only who has no beginning or end, who is the soul (of everything), and who is unmanifest. Those who look upon Viṣṇu and another deity as equal, go to terrible hells. Viṣṇu would not care for them. Viṣṇu, the lord, himself liberates a fool or a cāṇḍāla to whom Viṣṇu is dear. There is none greater than Viṣṇu, the wildfire for (i.e. burning) heaps of sins. A man even after having committed a terrible sin, is freed by the name of Viṣṇu. O you of good vows, god Viṣṇu, the father of the worlds, has put greater strength than himself into his name. Those who, on seeing lesser exertion with greater fruit in this dispute it (its efficacy), go to many hells. Therefore a man looking highly upon Viṣṇu's name, should be devoted to Hari. The lord would protect a worshipper from behind (i.e. secretly), and him who recites his name in the chest (i.e. from the front, i.e. openly). The name of Viṣṇu is a great destructive weapon like the thunderbolt in rending the mountain of sins. His feet are fruitful and move for that (only). The hands that worship him are alone said to be blessed. That head which bends before Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu) is the best part of the body. That is (really) the tongue that extols Viṣṇu. That (alone) is the mind, which

follows his feet. That alone is the hair which bristles at the utterance of his name. Those (alone) are tears that are shed due to Viṣṇu's devotion. Oh, the people are very much duped by their blemishes, (since) they do not resort to (him) by merely uttering his names. Those men also who are sinful due to contact with women, and whose hair does not stand on end at the utterance (of the name) of Kṛṣṇa, are duped. Those are fools who are not pure in mind, and who are afflicted by the grief due to (the death of) their sons etc., weep with various wailings and not at the utterance of the words about Kṛṣṇa. Those who though having got a tongue do not mutter the name of Viṣṇu, easily fall even after having secured the staircase to salvation. Therefore, a man should carefully (please) Viṣṇu by means of worldly and religious rites. Viṣṇu propitiated with worldly and religious rites, is pleased, not otherwise. The worship of Viṣṇu is said to be a holier place than a holy place. A man obtains that fruit by serving Viṣṇu which he obtains by bathing at and drinking (the water from) all the holy places. Only blessed men worship Viṣṇu by means of worldly and religious rites. Therefore, O sages, worship Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), who is extremely auspicious.

CHAPTER FIFTYONE

Karmayoga or Rules of Conduct

The sages said:

1-3. How is that path of action (consisting of worldly and religious rites), propitiated by which Viṣṇu becomes pleased, O Sūta? O illustrious one, O best among speakers, tell that to us. (Tell us about that Karmayoga) by which those desirous of salvation can propitiate the revered lord. Tell us also about that path of action, that protects all the worlds and is the totality of dharma, and of an embodied form, O Sūta. With a desire to hear this the sages have settled in front of you.

Sūta said:

4. Vyāsa, Satyavatī's son was formerly asked in this way only by sages, resembling fire. Hear what Vyāsa said to them:

Vyāsa said:

5-17. Listen, all sages, the ancient path of action which will be told and which gives endless fruits to brāhmaṇas, which is wholly established by the sacred tradition, and which is demonstrated for the brāhmaṇas, which is meritorious, and which is practised by groups of sages. Being attentive, hear when I explain it. An excellent brāhmaṇa, after having the investiture with the sacred thread, should study the Vedas. In the eighth year from conception, or in the eighth year (from birth), (he should have the investiture with the sacred thread) according to the rules in his manual of teaching in ritual. He should have a staff, wear a girdle, have the sacred thread and the skin of the black antelope, should be holy, should eat begged food, should be well-disposed to his preceptor, should always look up at his preceptor's face (to receive orders from him). Formerly Brahmā fashioned the three-stranded sacred thread of cotton and a silken garment for the brāhmaṇas. A brāhmaṇa should always wear the sacred thread, and should always keep the lock of hair on the crown of the head tied. (By doing so) an act done otherwise (i.e. in a perverse way) becomes done properly. He should put on a reddish cotton garment which is not deformed, or an excellent white one made of wool. The upper garment is enjoined to be an auspicious hide of a black antelope. In its absence, the one made of (the skin of) an ox or of that (of the skin) of a ruru (deer) is laid down. Raising the right hand it is placed on the left (shoulder). He should always wear the sacred thread. When the sacred thread is put on (i.e. worn round) the neck it is (called) 'nivīta'. O brāhmaṇas, when the sacred thread is put on the right (shoulder) after raising the left hand, it is (called) 'prācīnavīta'. It is to be employed in (i.e. while performing) the rites (in honour) of the manes. He should always wear the sacred thread in a firechamber, in a cow-pen, in (i.e. while performing) a sacrifice, in (i.e. while practising) penance, while doing self-study, taking food and in the vicinity of brāhmaṇas, while

serving his preceptors (and elders), at the time of the daily prayers, and in the company of the good. This is an ancient rule.

18-24. The girdle of a brāhmaṇa should be made triple, of the muñja-grass and soft. In the absence of the muñja-grass, it is said (to be made of) kuśa-grass with one knot or three knots. A brāhmaṇa should hold a staff of bamboo or palāśa and it should be (high) upto his hair. Or the staff should be made of a tree fit for (being used in) a sacrifice, and should be soft and without a bruise. Being tranquil, a brāhmaṇa should offer the morning and evening prayers. By avoiding it, due to passion, greed, fear or infatuation, he would be (a) fallen (brāhmaṇa). Then, with a pleased mind he should perform the fire-rites in the morning and in the evening. After having bathed, he should offer oblations to gods, sages and the hosts of manes. He should worship the deities with flowers, leaves, barley and water. He should, beingfree from sluggishness, always be inclined to salute the elders religiously bowing down before them, (and saying,) 'I am so and so', for securing a (long) life and good health. The words 'Enjoy a long life', should be uttered by a brāhmaṇa, when he is saluted ; and at the end of his name the sound 'ā' should be pronounced, by protracting the penultimate letter.

25-29. A learned man should not salute a brāhmaṇa who does not answer (i.e. greet back). He is just like a śūdra. The feet of the preceptor should be touched by a person with (the arrangement of) the hands reversed: he should touch the (preceptor's) left foot with his left hand, and right (foot) with his right (hand). Being controlled, and having got worldly, Vedic or metaphysical knowledge, he should first salute him. He should not have borrowed water, flowers and samidhs (the sacred sticks of wood). Such and other things are not (to be used) for (i.e. at the time of) rites in honour of deities. A man should ask a brāhmaṇa about his welfare, a kṣatriya about his good health, a vaiśya about his happiness and a śūdra about his health. (While greeting a brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya and śūdra, the words 'Kuśala, Anāmaya, Kṣema and Ārogya' should be respectively used).

30-35a. The preceptor, the father, the eldest brother, so also one who has protected him from a fear, the maternal uncle, the father-in-law, the maternal grandfather, the paternal

grandfather, one superior by caste, the paternal uncle are said to be respectable persons. The mother, the maternal grandmother, the (brothers and) sisters of the father and the mother, the mother-in-law, the paternal grandmother, the seniormost foster-mother are venerable ladies. O brāhmaṇas, these should be regarded as a group of the venerable ones from (the side of) the mother or the father. Through acts of the mind, speech and body he should obey them. Having seen his elders, he should stand up, saluting them with the palms of his hands joined. For his own sake he should not sit or discuss with them. For life's sake he should never talk hatefully with the elders. Even though excellent in other virtues, a man who hates his elders, falls down.

35b-40a. Out of these, five are to be specially respected: Out of these the first three are the greatest, and out of these (three) the mother is the most venerable. He who desires his welfare, should specially respect, with all efforts, even by casting his life, these five. As long as the father and the mother remain unchanged (in mind or attitude), a son should, giving up everything (else), be attached to them. If, by the good qualities of their son, the father and the mother are well pleased, then, the son would obtain all religious merits.

40b-45a. There is no (other) deity like the mother, and no (other) venerable person like the father. There can never be in their case doing good to them in return. He should always do what pleases them by means of deeds, thought and words. Without being permitted by them, he should not follow any other course of conduct except (in the case of rites having) liberation as their fruit or the obligatory and occasional (rites). The essence of piety is said to be giving an eternal fruit after death. Having properly propitiated the teacher, and allowed by him to go, a disciple enjoys the fruit of his learning after death, and enters heaven. He who slights his eldest brother who is like his father, goes, due to that blemish, to a terrible hell after death.

45b. A husband is (also) always to be respected as he is created as a man.

46-49a. In this world, a man attains greatness by serving his mother. He should stand up and salute the maternal and paternal uncles, fathers-in-law, priests and preceptors, and should

say (i.e. by declaring) 'I am so and so.' A man who is initiated should not be addressed by his name, even though he is younger. A man who is conversant with the rules of conduct should address him beginning with the words 'bho' and 'bhavat' (i.e. you). He should always be saluted, and honoured, by bowing their heads in respect, by brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and by those who desire prosperity.

49b-52a. A brāhmaṇa should never salute kṣatriyas etc. even though they are endowed with virtues like knowledge, (good) deeds, or even though they are highly learned. The scriptures say that a brāhmaṇa (alone) should invoke blessings for all (other) castes. A man of the same caste should salute other men of that caste. Fire is the most venerable to brāhmaṇas. A brāhmaṇa is the most venerable to (all) castes. To a woman the husband is the most venerable. A guest is everywhere the most honourable.

52b-55a. Learning, acts, age, relation and wealth as the fifth—these five are said to be respectable. The preceding one is superior to the succeeding. He who, out of the three castes, possesses (any) of them abundantly and strongly, deserves respect in this world. So also a śūdra who has reached the tenth (decade, i.e. who has crossed ninety). Way (i.e. side) should be given to a brāhmaṇa, a woman, a king and a blind man, an old man, one who is broken down with load, a sick man, and a weak man.

55b-66a. Being controlled and having everyday begged alms from the houses of eminent men, he should, with his speech controlled, eat it after informing the preceptor about it and after being allowed by him. An excellent brāhmaṇa, wearing a sacred thread, should beg food after addressing (the housewife) with the words 'bhavat' 'your ladyship' uttered first. A kṣatriya should beg alms with the words 'your ladyship' (uttered) in the middle of the (sentence), and a vaiśya with the words 'your ladyship' (uttered) in the end. He should first beg alms from his mother, or sister, or his mother's or his own sister, or from one who would not insult him. Begging alms in (i.e. from) the houses of people of his own caste or those of all castes except from the houses of those that are outcaste is prescribed. A celebate who is controlled, should receive alms from the houses of those that are

not bereft of Vedas and sacrifices and are praised in (i.e. for doing) their own acts. He should beg in (i.e. from) his preceptor's house but not from those of his own caste and relatives. If he does not get alms from other houses, he should avoid each former. If alms from these, already described, is not available, he should move in the entire village. Having been restrained, and with his speech controlled, and not looking into directions, he should, having collected the alms as desired, without any fraud, being restrained, with his speech controlled, eat it with a concentrated mind. He who follows a vow, should always live on alms, and should not (take food from) one (place only). The livelihood of him who lives on alms is like a fast. He should always respect his food and not revile it through pride. Seeing it he should be fully delighted, pleased and satisfied. Eating too much causes ill health, lack of (long) life and does not lead to heaven. It is not meritorious; it is hated by people. Therefore, he should avoid it.

66b-68. Facing the east or the sun, he should eat his food. It is an ancient rule that he should not eat food by facing the north. He who is (about) to eat should wash his hands and feet twice. Having sat in a pure place and having eaten the food there, he should twice wash (his hands etc.).

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

Rules for Sipping Water

Vyāsa said:

1-19. An excellent brāhmaṇa should again sip water having eaten, or drunk or slept, after walking in a street or having touched his lips after licking them, after putting on a garment, after having ejected semen, or urinated or cleared the bowels, after having told a lie, after spitting, at the beginning of study, after having (an attack of) asthma, so also after having crossed a place where many roads meet or a crematory, at the time of

both the prayers, even though he has already sipped water. Similarly he should sip water after talking with a cāṇḍāla or a mleccha, or with a woman, or a śūdra, or a person who has not washed his hands etc. after eating food, so also on seeing a man who has not washed his hands etc. and on seeing leavings of food, or on seeing tears being shed or bleeding, at the time of taking food, at the time of both the prayers after bathing, having drunk (water etc.), and having come after urination or clearing his bowels or should sip water once after having slept (and then got up), so also for other (similar reasons). On touching fire or cows, or a holy person, so also on being touched by women, he should sip water, so also after having touched a diseased person, grass or ground; so also (he should sip water) on touching his own hair, or on touching a garment that has fallen down. Always desiring purity, he should, with his head or neck covered, or with his hair and the lock of hair on the crown of his head loose, and being seated with his face towards the east or north, sip properly, water that is not hot, does not have hair in it and which is pure. Without washing his feet he would not be pure from (the impurity of having walked over) a path. A wise man should not sip water with shoes on, or while in a carriage or with his turban on; so also with the streams of rain-showers, while standing, or with water drawn out (of a well etc.), or with water made over with one hand and without wearing the sacred thread. So also (he should not sip water) while sitting on a seat; or with his knees outstretched, so also while talking, laughing, seeing (something) or lying on a bed. (He should not sip water) impaired with foam etc. or (water) that is dropped from the hands of a śūdra or an impure person or saline water. (While sipping water) he should not produce sound with his fingers, should not be distracted; (he should not sip water) which is polluted with colours and liquids; so also (the water) from crevices; so also that which is agitated with the hands, or with his shoulders stretched out. A brāhmaṇa is purified when the water reaches his heart, a kṣatriya becomes pure when it reaches his throat; a vaiśya, a woman and a śūdra are purified when it touches (their bodies) from within after it is drunk. The part of the hand situated on the line at the root of the thumb is called Brāhma. The part between the thumb and the fore-

finger is said to be the holy place of the manes. The part below the little is called Prājāpatya. The tip of a finger is said to be divine. The same is called Ārṣa ('of the sages'). The root is daiva or ārṣa, and the middle part is said to be Āgneya (of Agni). The same is sacred to Soma. Knowing this he is not confounded. A brāhmaṇa should always sip with the Brāhma holy place.

20-34a. Brāhmaṇas should offer sacrifices with the daiva and (offer oblations) to the manes with the paitrya (i.e. the portion between the thumb and the fore-finger). Then, being restrained, he should thrice offer water with the Brāhma (portion). Having washed with the root of the thumb he should touch the mouth. With the thumb and the ring-finger he should then touch both his eyes. He should (then) touch the two nostrils with the fore-finger and the thumb. He should touch the ears with the little finger and the thumb. With all of them he should touch the chest, the head and both the shoulders with his thumb. He should drink (i.e. sip) water thrice. By that the deities, viz. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are pleased. This is what we have heard. By wiping Gaṅgā and Yamunā are pleased. When the eyes are touched, the Moon and the Sun are pleased. When he would touch the two nostrils, Nāsatya and Dasra (i.e. the two Aśvins) are pleased. Similarly when the ears are touched, wind and fire are pleased. When the chest is touched all the deities are pleased. By touching the head, that Puruṣa (the highest lord) is pleased. He does not become impure with the water-drops clinging to his mouth; similarly in the case of water-drops clinging to the teeth, he would become pure by the touch of the tongue. There would be no impurity due to the drops which would touch his feet when he makes others sip water. They should be regarded like dust particles. Manu declared that in the case of Madhuparka, Soma, eating tāmbūla, or fruits, roots, sugarcane, there is no blemish. A man might have a thing in his hand, while moving for food or drink; having put that thing on the ground, and having sipped water he should sprinkle water over it. If after taking a golden object a brāhmaṇa would become impure, he should keep it on the ground; and after sipping water, should sprinkle (water over it). By not putting the object on the ground, by taking which he becomes impure, he would

(continue to) be impure (if he does not, after keeping it down, sip water). There would be an option in the case of garments etc. Having touched it he may sip water.

34b-47. If he urinates or clears his bowels, with an object in his hand, in a solitary forest, at night, or on a path full of thieves and tigers, he is not defiled. Putting his sacred thread on his right ear he should urinate or clear his bowels while facing the north during the day, and facing the south during the night. Having covered the ground with pieces of wood, leaves, clods or grass, and having covered his head, he should urinate or clear his bowels. He should not urinate or excrete in shade, a hollow, a river, a cow-pen, a sanctuary, water, on a road or ashes, so also fire and crematory. He should not urinate or excrete on cowdung, a piece of wood, a great tree, meadow, while standing without clothes, the region of a mountain, in an old temple, an anthill; so also into ditches with beings in them, or while going; so also on fire of chaff or pieces of broken jars, and on a highway. So also (he should not urinate or excrete) in a field, a hole, a sacred place or a place where many roads meet, in a garden, near water, on a barren spot with saline soil, and in caves; (he should not urinate or excrete) with shoes or wooden sandals on, or with an umbrella or in the air; (he should not urinate or execrete) facing women, his preceptor, brāhmaṇas or cows, deities and temples or water, while looking at stars or with his back to them; so also by facing the sun, fire or the moon. Taking clay from a mound that would remove the smell, he should carefully purify himself with water that is drawn up. A brāhmaṇa should not take (i.e. use) the clay that is defiled or muddy or from the road or from a barren spot with saline soil, or that has remained after being used by someone else, or from a temple, or a well, a house or water. Then, he should always sip water as told before.

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

Rules of Conduct for a Celibate Student

Vyāsa said :

1-22. Thus endowed with a staff etc. and with purity and (proper) conduct, when called he should study looking at the face of the preceptor. He should always have his hands raised (i.e. should be ready), and should be well-controlled having good conduct. When told by the teacher 'sit down', he should sit facing him. He should not lie, so also should be seated or be eating food, while listening to or talking (with his preceptor). So also he should not remain with his face turned away (from his preceptor). His bed or seat should always be near his teacher (but) downwards (i.e. at a low level). When within the range of the preceptor's sight, he should not sit on a seat as he likes. Even in the absence of his preceptor he should not utter his name. He should not imitate his gait, speech or movement. He should cover his ears, or go to another place from the place where the preceptor is being censured or blamed. Remaining away (i.e. from a distance) he should not honour him, so also when angry he should not honour him, nor when he is near a woman. Being seated he should not give a reply to him; nor should he sit near him. He should always bring for him a jar with water (in it), kuśas, flowers and sacrificial sticks. He should cleanse his body and apply unguents to it. He should never cross over the remains of (flowers etc. used by) him, his bed, wooden sandals or shoes, so also his seat or shadow. He should secure pieces of wood used as a toothbrush etc. and report to him whatever is obtained by him. Without asking him (i.e. his permission) he should not go anywhere, and should be devoted to his well-being and what is liked by him. In the presence of the preceptor he should always avoid yawning, laughing, covering his neck or cracking (the limbs of) his body. He should study at the proper time, when the preceptor is not depressed. He should sit on a seat lower than that of the preceptor or by his side, and with concentration (offer him) service. He should never remain (i.e. sit) on his seat or bed. He should run after the preceptor when he is running; should go (i.e. walk) after

when he is going. On kuśa seats or on a bull, a horse or a camel, so also on a slab or a plank or (while travelling) in boats, he should sit with (i.e. by) the preceptor. He should always control his senses, should control his mind, should be free from anger and pure. He should always use sweet and wholesome words. He should carefully avoid perfumes, flowers, drinks, (other) preparations, pearls, or harm to creatures, so also rubbing his body with unctuous substances, applying pigment to his body, or rubbing it, so also holding (i.e. using) an umbrella. (He should avoid) lust, greed, fear, sleep, singing or playing upon musical instruments, dancing, threatening, abuse, looking at or securing a woman, assaulting another person or wickedness. He should fetch a jar full of water, flowers, cowdung, clay, kuśas (for his preceptor). Everyday he should bring food and alms. Ghee, salt and all that is stale should be avoided. He should never witness dances, and should not long for (listening to) songs. He should not look at the sun, nor should he clean his teeth. Remaining in a lonely place with women is impure, so also talking with śūdras etc. He should not voluntarily take medicine or food left by his preceptor, so also should not excrete or bathe at his will.

23-34. He should never think of leaving his preceptor. If he leaves him through infatuation or greed, he would fall. He should never have malice against him from whom he would get worldly, Vedic or metaphysical knowledge. Manu has said that a preceptor, even though he is arrogant, he does not know what ought and what ought not to be done, he has gone astray, should not be abandoned. A man should behave towards his preceptor's preceptor as he behaves with his own preceptor. Having saluted and being allowed by the preceptor, he should salute his preceptors. Thus he should behave with his preceptor who gives him knowledge; so also with meditating saints, who prohibit him from unrighteous acts and who advise what is beneficial to him. It is excellent for him always to behave in the same way as he behaves with his preceptor, with the preceptor's sons, wife and kinsmen. A wise man should honour respectable persons (even though they are) young. The son of a teacher who teaches deserves respect like the teacher. He should not clean the limbs of the teacher's

son, should not bathe him, should not eat what is left by him, so also should not wash his feet. The preceptor's wife belonging to the same caste, should be honoured like the preceptor. The one not belonging to the same caste should be honoured by getting up (when she comes) and saluting her. He should not apply unguents to the body of the preceptor's wife, or give her bath, or clean the limbs of her body; so also he should not dress her hair. The young wife of the preceptor is not to be saluted by touching her feet. He should salute her (by putting his hands) on the ground, saying, 'I am so and so'.

35-39. Remembering the course of conduct of the good, he should honour his mother's sister, his maternal uncle's wife, his mother-in-law, his father's sister as (he would honour) his preceptor's wife. They are like his preceptor's wife to him. Everyday he should also kindly receive his brother's wife of the same caste. Women related to him through caste should be honoured by staying away from them. He should behave as he behaves with his mother, towards his father's sister, mother's sister, and his elder sister. (Yet) the mother is superior to them. A preceptor should teach the Vedas to a disciple who is thus endowed with good conduct, who is prudent and not deceitful; so also he should everyday teach him religious texts, Purāṇas and Vedāṅgas. A preceptor who does not teach the disciple who has stayed with him for a year, takes the sin of the disciple living with him.

40-44. These ten should be taught (by the preceptor) according to the rule : the son of his preceptor, one who serves him, one who gives him (some other) knowledge, one who is righteous, one who is pure, one who is capable, one who gives him food, one who gives him water and one who is good. These six of the brāhmaṇa-caste, viz. one who has learnt (the Vedas) by heart, one who is not deceitful, one who is very intelligent, one who takes to his teacher, one who is trustworthy, and dear should be taught according to the rule. To these and other brāhmaṇas gifts should be given duly. Having sipped water and being restrained, he should, facing the north, study. Having seized the feet of (i.e. having saluted) the preceptor and looking at his face, he should say : 'O (sir, please) teach me.' He should stop when (the teacher says :) 'Let there be a stop

(now).' Purifying himself and having the points (of the kuśas) turned towards the east, he should, with blades of kuśa grass, wait upon (a deity etc.). Purified by the three (kinds of) prāṇāyāma, he deserves (to pronounce) Oṁkāra.

45-49. O brāhmaṇas, at the beginning and the end (of a rite) a brāhmaṇa should duly honour Oṁkāra. Having first offered respectful offering with the palms of his hands joined, he should undertake instruction daily. The ancient Veda is the eye of all creatures. He should study it daily. Otherwise he loses his status as a brāhmaṇa. He should study the hymns from the Ṛgvda. He (thereby) offers an oblation of milk. When he offers oblations of desired objects to the deities, he pleases them along with gods. (If) he always studies the yajus-formulae, he pleases the deities with (an offering of) curd. (If) he studies sāmans everyday, he pleases the deities with (an offering of) ghee. If he studies (hymns from) the Atharvāṅgirasa (Veda) daily, he pleases the deities with honey. (If he studies) the Purāṇas, religious texts, he pleases the gods with the flesh (-like parts of fruits).

50-58. Resorting to the daily rites in the morning and the evening, after being controlled, he should, being calm, go to a forest and properly study (the) Gāyatrī (hymn). He should daily mutter the Gāyatrī (hymn). (Repeating it) a thousand (times) is best, a hundred (times (is) middle (i.e. next to it), and ten (times is) the lowest. It is called the sacrifice of muttering prayers. The lord (once) weighed Gāyatrī and the Vedas with a scale. The four Vedas were on one side, and Gāyatrī on the other (i.e. both weighed equally). Having first uttered Oṁkāra, then the vyāhṛtis,[1] he should, with concentration and faith, study (i.e. recite) the Gāyatrī (hymn). In the former kalpa, the three ancient, great vyāhṛtis, viz. Bhūr, Bhuvas and Svaḥ, destroying all inauspicious (things), sprang up. Pradhāna (or Prakṛti), Puruṣa, Kāla, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Śiva, the three (constituents of

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1. Vyāhṛti—A mystic word uttered by every Brāhmaṇa in performing his daily sandhyā-adoration. These syllables are three : Bhūr, Bhuvas and Svar, usually repeated after 'Om' (See Manu. 2.76). According to some, they are seven.

the Prakṛti viz.) Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, are said to be the vyāhṛtis in succession. Oṁkāra is that highest Brahman, and Sāvitrī would be next to it. The hymn has a great propriety, and is said to be the essence of essences. He, who, being restrained, everyday studies this Gāyatrī, the mother of the Vedas, along with its meaning, goes to (i.e. gets) the highest position. Gāyatrī is the mother of the Vedas ; Gāyatrī purifies the worlds. There is nothing greater to be muttered than Gāyatrī. Knowing this one is liberated.

59-62. Commencement of reading the Veda is said (to take place) on the full moon day of Śrāvaṇa, or the full moon day of Āṣāḍha or of Bhādrapada, O best brāhmaṇas. A man, being controlled and calm, should study (the Vedas) at a pure spot for five months and a half, when the sun proceeds to the south. A brāhmaṇa should suspend the Vedic studies in Pauṣa. A brāhmaṇa should study the Vedas in the morning of the first day of the bright fortnight of the month. A man should study the Vedāṅgas and the Purāṇas in the dark fortnight of the month.

63-70a. One who studies (i.e. the student) and so also one who teaches, studying (the sacred texts) carefully, should always avoid these intermissions of study : When the wind blows audibly at night, when a mass of dust (moves) by day, when there is lightning, or when it rains with thundering, or when there is a surge of great meteors. Prajāpati has prescribed untimely intermission on these occasions. When fires break out, one should know that they have come up. (So also) one should know that there is suspension of study when clouds are seen out of season, when there is a hurricane, when the earth quakes, and when the luminaries are eclipsed. These should be looked upon as (times of) the suspension of study, even when it is the season of study. (So also) when fires break out, when there is lightning or thundering. If there is thundering, there would be suspension of study during the remaining night or day. There should certainly be suspension of study in the villages or cities. For those who desire skill in religion, there should always be suspension of study when there is stinking smell, when there is a corpse in the village, and in the presence of a cāṇḍāla, when someone is weeping; so also when it is the time of the cloud.

70b-72a. A learned brāhmaṇa should not even mentally

think of urinating or excreting in water or at midnight; or when he has not washed his hands etc. after taking food, or after eating at a śrāddha, or after having received the fees at a śrāddha or funeral rite performed for one definite individual[1]. He should not study the Vedas for three days during the mourning period of the king or impurity (due to eclipse caused) by Rāhu.

72b-85a. As long as he has partaken of food at one place and there is the presence of oiliness on the body of the learned brāhmaṇa, he should not study the Vedas. He should not study while lying or with his legs stretched or with a cloth girt round his legs and knees[2]; so also after having eaten flesh or the food at the śrāddha of a śūdra. Impurity for three nights is declared at the time of (fall of) mist, sound of an arrow, and at the time of both the twilights; so also on the new moon day and the fourteenth day; so also on the full moon day and the eighth day, for commencement or suspension of Vedic studies; so also the collection of three nights at the end of the season, beginning from the seventh day after the full moon. The wise have declared the collection of three days (7th, 8th and 9th) in the months of Pauṣa and Māgha and in the dark fortnights. A man should never study in the shadow of the ślaṣmātaka tree, so also of śālmali or madhūka; so also in the shadow of kovidāra and kapittha. When one who is his student-friend or co-student has expired, or his preceptor is dead, impurity is said to be there for three nights. These flaws are said to be (the occasions for) suspension of study for the brāhmaṇas. During them the demons harm (men). Therefore (a brāhmaṇa) should avoid them. There is no suspension of the obligatory rites or offering the sandhyā-prayers. During the collection of the three days (7th, 8th, 9th) etc., or when the wind is blowing, he should not study a ṛc, or a yājus or sāmans at the beginning of Vedic studies, or at the end of a sacrifice or in the middle of it. There is no suspension of studies of the Vedāṅgas, Itihāsa, Purāṇas, and other religious texts. One should avoid these. This in brief is

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1. Ekoddiṣṭa—A Śrāddha or funeral rite performed for one definite individual deceased, not including other ancestors.

2. Avasakthikā—A cloth girt round the legs and knees (by a person), when sitting on his hams.

declared to be the course of conduct for a celibate (i.e. a religious student); it was formerly told by Brahmā to the sages who had purified their souls. A twice-born who, not studying the scriptures, strives for something else, is a fool. He is out of the Vedic fold and should not be talked to by twice-borns.

85b-90. A twice-born should not be satisfied merely by the recital of the Vedas. Merely ending his study with the recital of the Vedas, he sinks as a cow sinks in mud. He who duly studies (i.e. recites) the Veda, but does not reflect on its meaning, is a fool, almost a śūdra, and is not a worthy person. If he desires to stay permanently with the teacher, he should, being diligent, serve him till death. Going to the forest he should duly offer oblations into fire. In the same way, being devoted to Brahman and being calm, he should study everyday. Always being devoted, and engaged in eating begged food, he should always study the Gāyatrī, Śatarudriya and especially the Upaniṣads. About the Vedic knowledge this is an ancient statement which I have told you now and which the lord Svāyambhuva Manu, when asked by the best sages, told (them).

CHAPTER FIFTYFOUR

Rules for the Householder

Vyāsa said:

1-8a. O brāhmaṇas, having studied one Veda, two Vedas or (the four) Vedas, along with the Vedāṅgas, and having understood their meaning, the best twice-born should perform the ceremony of bathing at the time of leaving his spiritual teacher. Having given money to his teacher, he should perform the ceremony of bathing at the time of leaving his teacher with the teacher's permission. Or if he has completed a vow, or has set his mind on the Supreme Soul or is capable, he deserves to perform the ceremony of bathing at the time of leaving his teacher (i.e.

should stop his studies). He should hold a staff of bamboo, wear an inner garment, so also an upper one, a sacred thread of two strands, and carry a pot with water, an umbrella, a clean turban, wooden sandals and shoes. He should also put on golden ear-rings and should not wear a red chaplet except of gold. He should always wear a white garment, should always use perfumes, and should be of a pleasing appearance. When he is affluent, he should not wear old garments. He should not wear a red or a thick garment, so also a garment and ear-rings worn by others. So also he should not use shoes, chaplets or (wooden) sandals (used by others); so also the sacred thread, ornament, darbhas, the skin of a black antelope (worn by others). He should not wear the sacred thread allowing it to hang down from the right shoulder, nor he should wear a garment untidily.

8b-12. He should duly secure a wife befitting him and auspicious, so also endowed with beauty and auspicious marks and free from family-blemishes; a brāhmaṇa should have a wife not born in his father's family, (but) born in the family of some other man, and endowed with good character and purity. Till a son is born, he should have intercourse with her during the period favourable for conception. He should carefully avoid (intercourse on) prohibited days: the sixth, eighth, fifteenth, twelfth, and fourteenth. He should always be controlled; similarly he should establish the marriage-fire and should offer (oblations into) fire.

13-21. One who has returned from the house of his teacher should always devise these purifying (practices). Everyday he should carefully perform his rites enjoined by the Vedas. He who does not perform them falls into very fearful hells. Being controlled, he should study the Veda and should not neglect the great sacrifices. He should perform the domestic rites, and also the sandhyā (-prayer). He should form friendship with his equals and superiors; he should always go to a powerful person. He should go to the deities, and should maintain his wife. A wise man should not extol (his) righteous deeds, and should also not conceal a sin. Always being compassionate to all beings he should always bring about his welfare. He should always move, acting like a nobly born person in respect of place, speech and intellect, age, acts, wealth and learning. He should properly

resort to those practices that are enjoined by the Śrutis and Smṛtis and that are followed by the good. He should not desire anything else. He should go along that path of the good, along which his forefathers and paternal grandfather have gone. By going along that he does not get defiled. He should always be devoted to the study of the Vedas. He should always wear the sacred thread. He should speak the truth, control his anger, and should be free from greed and infatuation. The householder engaged in muttering the Gāyatrī (-hymn) and performing śrāddha is liberated.

22-24. He who is engaged in the well-being of his mother and father, who is engrossed in the good of brāhmaṇas, who is a donor, a sacrificer, a devotee of gods, is honoured in Brahmā's world. He should always pursue the three objects of worldly existence, should everyday worship the deities, and being controlled he should salute the gods. He should always give gifts, should be endowed with forgiveness and should be kind. Such a man is called a householder. A man is not a householder because of (his staying) in a house.

25-33a. The characteristics of a brāhmaṇa are: forgiveness, kindness, vijñāna (worldly knowledge), truthfulness, control, tranquility, knowledge about the eternality of the Supreme Spirit. An excellent brāhmaṇa should not especially err in these. Practising the code of conduct according to his capacity, he should avoid what is condemned. Shaking off the snare of delusion, securing excellent yoga, a householder is freed from bondage. No doubt should be raised here. Forgiveness is tolerating the faults of others due to anger and of the nature of ill conduct, violation (of rules), wrath, harm, bondage, killing. Not showing kindness (i.e. sympathy) in one's griefs, (but) showing kindness of heart in the griefs of others—this the sages call kindness. It is the means of religious merit. Having the knowledge of the fourteen branches of learning for (the good of) others should be known as worldly knowledge by which righteousness develops. By studying the branches of learning methodically wealth also is obtained. He should do righteous acts. This is called worldly knowledge. He conquers the world with truth; truth is that highest position, since the wise say that not erring towards the creatures is truth. Abstaining from (the enjoyments

of) the body is control. Tranquility is wisdom due to propitiousness.

33b-36. Metaphysical knowledge is (that of) the immutable one going where he does not grieve. That is declared to be knowledge by which that revered lord, god Viṣṇu is actually perceived. A learned brāhmaṇa who is devoted to Him, who looks upon Him as the highest, who is always free from anger and is pure, who is engaged in (performing the five) great sacrifices obtains that Excellent One. He should carefully protect his body which is the abode of (securing) piety. Men cannot know that highest Viṣṇu without the body.

37-40. A brāhmaṇa, being restrained, should engage (himself) in acts of piety, worldly gains, and love of sensual enjoyments. He should not mentally remember (i.e. think of) worldly gains or sensual enjoyments without (thinking of) piety. Even though he is sinking due to (acts of) righteousness, he should not practise unrighteous acts. Piety is the revered lord, and the (only) resort for all creatures. He should do what is good to (other) beings. He should never think of doing an act of deceiving others. He should not censure Veda and deities, and should not stay with them (who censure Veda and deities). That controlled and pure man who would recite this chapter on piety, or would teach or read out (to others), is honoured in Brahmā's heaven.

CHAPTER FIFTYFIVE

Donṭ's for a Twice-born Householder

Vyāsa said:

1-8. (A man) should not harm any creature. He should never tell a lie. He should not speak what is not beneficial or what is not agreeable. He should never be a thief (i.e. should never steal). A creature that takes away (even a blade of) grass, or vegetable, or clay or even water, goes to hell. (Even) if he is poor, he should not accept (anything) from a king or a śūdra or

from one who is fallen or from anyone else. A wise man should (always) avoid censured persons. He should not always be a suppliant; he should not implore the same person again. Doing this the suppliant takes away the life of the wicked one. He, especially an excellent twice-born, should not take away the wealth of deities; even in difficulties he should never snatch away the wealth of a brāhmaṇa. Poison is not called poison. The wealth of a brāhmaṇa is called poison. He should also carefully avoid (taking away) the wealth of deities. Prajāpati Manu has said that (taking) flowers, vegetables, water, wood, roots, fruits, grass which are not offered, is not stealing. A twice-born should take flowers in the act of worshipping deities. He should not always take them from one person only, and without his permission.

9-12. A wise man should openly take away grass, wood, fruits and flowers. This they say is (done for having) religious merit. Otherwise he would be fallen. O brāhmaṇas, a handful of sesamum-seeds, kidney-beans, barley etc. should be taken by those who are hungry while on journey, not otherwise for righteousness etc. This is the correctness of conduct. One should not practise a vow under the pretext of righteousness, after having committed a sin. A twice-born, covering his sins by means of a vow, and deceiving women and śūdras, is condemned after death and here (i.e. in this world) also by the teachers of the Veda. That vow which is fraudulently practised, goes to the demons.

13-21a. He who is not a brāhmaṇa ascetic, but goes about in the guise of a brāhmaṇa ascetic, would snatch the sin of that ascetic, and is born in an animal species. He who begs, has (illegitimate) intercourse with or company of or talks with (women), always falls. Therefore, he should carefully avoid this. He should not plot against deities and preceptors. Plotting against a preceptor is crores of crore times worse than plotting against gods. Scandal and atheism are a crore times worse than that. By means of cows, deities, brāhmaṇas, agriculture, service of a king, those families which are bereft of righteousness lose their status of (good) families. Families also lose their status of (good) families due to bad thoughts, omission of essential ceremonies, and by not studying the Veda, so also by offending

a brāhmaṇa. A family quickly perishes due to falsehood, adultery, eating what is prohibited, and practising what is not enjoined for the family. The family also quickly perishes due to giving (presents) to brāhmaṇas who are not learned, to śūdras and to those who are bereft of the course of conduct that is enjoined. A man should not stay in a village chosen by irreligious people or full of diseases. He should not live in the kingdom of śūdras, or in one that is crowded by heretics.

21b-25a. A twice-born should not live in any other country than the auspicious one between Himālaya and Vindhya and the eastern and the western seas. Or a twice-born should live where a black deer always moves naturally, or where auspicious and well-known rivers (flow), avoiding (the distance of) half a krośa from the bank of the river. Except at an auspicious place he should not stay, nor also near the village of śūdras. He should not stay with the fallen, cāṇḍālas, pulkasas, fools, the arrogant, and others taking abodes with (i.e. depending upon) their wives.

25b-27. These eleven are said to be the faults present in the mixture (of castes): (using) one (and the same) bed or seat, (sitting for taking food in the same) line, (eating from the same) pot, mixing (one another's) food, performing sacrifice for or teaching (low caste people), intercourse or taking food along with (the low caste people), studying together as the tenth, and conducting a sacrifice along with them. Sin would pass on to men even by remaining in their proximity.

28-30a. Therefore with all efforts he should avoid (such) mixture. (The sin of) mixture does not take place in the case of those who, (though) sitting in the same line, do not touch one another and have made a demarcation (between themselves) with ashes. A line is separated by (these) six: fire, ashes, water, by making a mark, by means of a door or a pillar.

30b-35. He should not enter into fruitless enmity, so also discussion, or should not entertain wickedness; he should never report about a cow grazing in someone else's field. He should not remain with a traducer; he should not use stinging words for anyone. A wise man should not tell another person about the sun's halo or the rainbow, the daily religious rite performed by another person, the moon or gold. He should not have hostility

with many and with his relatives also. He should not do to others what is unpleasant to himself. He should not tell about the date (*tithi*) of a fortnight (*pakṣa*); he should not condemn the stars. The best twice-born should not talk to a woman in her menses or a person who is impure. He should not stop what is being given to deities and preceptors (and elders) and brāhmaṇas. He should not praise himself and he should avoid censuring others.

36-42a. He should carefully avoid censuring the Vedas and the deities. O best sages, no expiation for him is seen in the sacred texts, who censures gods, sages or Vedas. The man who would censure a preceptor, a deity, the Veda, a garment, a pillow is roasted in Raurava (hell) for a hundred crores of kalpas. He should keep mum when censure is going on; he should not give any reply. Covering his ears, he should go (away from that place) and should not see him (who censures). A wise man should avoid (discussing) the secrets of others, and also censuring others. He should never enter into a discussion with his own people. The best twice-born should not talk about the sin of sinners or the absence of it. The fault would be equal to the fault due to (not telling) the truth. He would be guilty due to falsehood. The tears of men maligned kill the sons and beasts of the maligner.

42b-75. The wise have observed atonement for killing a brāhmaṇa, drinking liquor, stealing, or cohabiting with one's preceptor's wife; but there is no atonement for the maligner. He should not, without any (proper) ground, see the sun or the moon while rising or setting, or (reflected) in water, or touched (i.e. screened) by clouds, or (appearing) in the middle (of the sky), or screened, or reflected in a mirror etc. He should never see a naked woman or man, urine or excretion, (or a man and woman) united in copulation. A wise man, while impure, should not see the planets like the sun and the moon. With his hands etc. not washed after having eaten food, or covering himself with a veil he should not talk to another person. He should not have contact with a dead body, nor should he see the face of his angry teacher. He should not see his reflection in oil or water, and his wife when she is taking food. He should not see an elephant free from chains, nor an intoxicated one. He should not

eat with his wife, nor should he see her while she is eating, or sneezing, or yawning, or seated comfortably on a seat. A wise man should not see his form (i.e. reflection) in water; and should never cross or stand by the auspicious or inauspicious. He should not offer advice, a dish of rice and peas mixed, milk or curds to a śūdra. A wise man should not give the remains of food, honey, ghee, and the hide of a black antelope and oblations. He should not also tell him a vow or rules of conduct. He should not be under the sway of anger, and should avoid hatred or passion. He should avoid greed, religious hypocrisy, wickedness, jealousy and censure, so also envy, pride, grief and infatuation. He should not inflict pain on anyone; but should beat his son or disciple. He should not serve inferior people, and should never have longing in his mind. He should not look down upon himself, and should carefully avoid low-spiritedness. A wise man should not disrespect a respectable person or himself through ignorance. He should not draw (lines) on the ground with his nails, nor should he sleep on (bare) ground. He should not talk about a river when in rivers, nor about mountains when he is (i.e. has climbed) on them. He should not abandon his co-traveller in an abode or at meals. He should not, being naked, plunge into water; so also he should not cross fire. He should not besmear his body with oil left after anointing his head. He should not play with serpentine weapons; he should not touch the apertures of, or the hair on the private parts of his body. He should not go with a person who is not respectable. He should not resort to wantonness in respect of his hands, feet, speech or eyes, also of the organs of generation or belly. He should not make a sound with the parts of his body or nails; he should not drink water from the cavity (made by joining his hands). He should never strike water with his feet or hands. He should not destroy roots and fruits with bricks. He should not learn the language of mlecchas; he should not drag the foot-stool. A wise man should not suddenly, and without any cause, split, crack, clip or write (with) nails or rub them together. He should not eat food (by keeping it) on his lap; he should not make any movement without any cause. He should not dance or sing or play upon musical instruments. He should not scratch his head with his hands joined. He should not please the deities with popular hymns or of the lord of speech (i.e. Bṛhaspati).

He should not play with dice; he should no run; the should not urinate or excrete in water. He should not sleep without washing his hands etc. after having taken food; he should not always bathe naked. He should not recite while going, nor should he touch his own head. He should not cut off his nails and hair with his teeth; he should not wake up a sleeping person. He should not resort to the morning sunshine; he should avoid the smoke of a dead body (being burnt). He should not sleep in a deserted house; he should not take his own shoes. He should not spit without any cause; he should not cross a river with his arms (i.e. by swimming). He should not wash his feet with one (or the other) foot. A wise man should not warm his feet with one (or the other) foot. A wise man should not warm his feet in fire, nor should he wash in a bell-metal (vessel). He should not open wide (his eyes before) a deity, brāhmaṇas, or a cow, or wind, fire, a king or the sun and the moon. While impure, he should never sleep, or drink, or study, or bathe, or take food or go out. He should always avoid sleeping, studying, bathing, smearing the body with perfumes, taking food or walking at both the twilights or at midday. A twice-born who has not washed his hands etc. after taking food should not touch with his hand a cow or a brāhmaṇa or fire; should not move his feet or should not touch the image of a deity. While impure, he should not touch fire, should not wait upon the deities or communicate with sages. He should not plunge into very deep water; he should not run without a cause. He should not drink water raising (the water pot) with his left hand or by (touching the water pot) with his mouth.

76-94. He should not cross (water) without bathing in it; he should not emit his semen into water. He should not cross an impure (object), an uncovered (object), a worthy object, blood, poisons, or a stream. He should not copulate in water. He should not cut the grove round a sanctuary; he should not spit into water. He should never stand on bones, potsherds, hair, thorns, chaff of grain, charcoal, or dry cow-dung. A wise man should not cross fire; he should never put it down. A wise man should not stir it with his foot or blow it with a winnowing basket. He should not climb up a tree, or being impure, think about (it). He should not throw fire into (another) fire, and should not put it

out with water. He should report the death of his friend to others. He should not use for selling (i.e. should not sell) what is not fit to be sold or what is spurious. A wise man, while impure, should not cause to burn brightly fire with the breath. He should not snatch the boundary line at an auspicious place, or a place of water. He should never break an appointment with a person that has come to him. He should not make beasts, tigers or birds fight among themselves. He should not trouble others by means of water, wind or heat. Causing (the preceptor) to do good things (for him), he should not later deceive his preceptor. For protection he should close tightly the doors of his house in the morning and evening. He should avoid using outside flowers, perfumes, taking food with his wife, or entry after fighting and disputing. A wise brāhmaṇa should not stand while eating, or talk or laugh. He should not touch his (sacred) fire with his own hand; he should not remain in water for a long time. He should not blow into fire with the wings (of a bird), nor with a winnowing basket or hand. He should kindle fire with the mouth. Fire was produced from the mouth. A wise man should not speak to another man's wife, nor should act as a priest at the sacrifice of him who does not deserve to perform it. A twice-born should not move alone, (but) should avoid a crowd. Never should he go to a temple by not turning to the right. He should not squeeze his garments, nor should he sleep in a temple. He should not travel all alone or with unrighteous persons, or with persons suffering from diseases or, with śūdras or with a fallen person, or without shoes, so also without (taking) water (with him). On the road, a twice-born should never cross an animal or funeral pyre. He should not censure meditating saints, siddhas, so also those who practise vows and ascetics. A wise man should not deliberately cross the shadow of a temple, (the images of) deities, sacrificers, brāhmaṇas and also of a cow. He should not allow his own shadow to be crossed by the fallen etc. and the diseased. He should never stand on the ashes of charcoal or hair etc. He should avoid the dust from a broom or the water for bath, for washing garments or from an earthen pot. A twice-born should not eat prohibited eatables and should not drink prohibited drinks.

CHAPTER FIFTYSIX

Do's and Don't's in Eating

Vyāsa said:

1-3. A twice-born should not eat the food of a śūdra through infatuation or longing. He who eats it when it is not a time of distress, is reborn as a śūdra. That twice-born who eats the condemned food of a śūdra for six months, becomes a śūdra even when alive, and after death is born as a dog. O best sages, a man who dies with the food of a brāhmaṇa, or a kṣatriya or a vaiśya or a śūdra in his belly, would get his birth (i.e. would be born as a brāhmaṇa etc.).

4-15. He should avoid the six (kinds of) food: the food of a king, the food of a dancer, the food of a eunuch, the food of shoe-makers, the food prepared for a number of persons in common, the food of a courtesan. He should avoid the food of an oilman, a washerman, a thief, a distiller, so also the food of a singer, a blacksmith, and food (impure due to) a dead person. (He should avoid) the food of a potter or a painter, and of a usurer, or a fallen person, so also of the son of a remarried widow, of the bearer of an umbrella, so also of one who is cursed, so also of a goldsmith, an actor, a hunter, a barren woman and of one who is afflicted; so also (he should avoid) the food of a physician, an unchaste woman and a staff-bearer. (He should avoid) the food of a thief, an atheist, of one who censures deities, of a seller of water, and especially of a cāṇḍāla. (He should avoid) the food of him who is subdued by his wife, or of him whose (wife's) paramour lives in his house; so also (the food) of him who is abandoned, who is a miser, so also of him who eats the remains of the food (eaten by others). (He should avoid) the food of a sinner, the food prepared for a number of people living together, and also the food of a professional soldier. (He should avoid) the food of a frightened person, of a person who is weeping, and food which is inferior and wasted. (He should avoid) the food of him who hates brāhmaṇas (or the Vedas), who takes delight in (committing) sins, so also the food prepared for a śrāddha ceremony, or (for a rite in honour) of the dead, or food that is prepared without any need, so also food (that is impure)

due to a corpse or the food of an afflicted person. (He should avoid) the food of women having no children, so also of an ungrateful man; (he should) especially (avoid) the food of an artisan and also of a dealer in arms. (He should avoid) the food of him who is addicted to liquor, a bell-ringer, so also of physicians; the food of the offspring of a learned man, so also that of the younger brother who has married before his elder brother. (He should) especially (avoid) the food of a widow who is remarried, so also of the husband of a woman who is married twice. (He should avoid) the food that is despised, rejected and (that is prepared) through anger or doubt. He should not even eat his preceptor's food which is not purified. All the wicked deeds of a man are settled in his food.

16-19a. He who eats the food of him (i.e. of a man), eats his sin. A friend who is a half-caste man, or of a low family, a cowherd, a porter, a barber, should be given food among (i.e. along with) śūdras; so also the person who declares himself. A bard, a potter, a peasant should be fed with the śūdras by a wise man noticing (their) little merit. Rice boiled in milk, so also (food) cooked in oil, curds (or butter-milk), barley-meal, oil-cakes, and oil should be accepted by the twice-born from śūdras.

19b-24. (But) he should avoid egg-plant, stalks of lotuses, safflower, gold or silver, onion, garlic, sour gruel, a thick fluid substance; so also chatraka (a kind of mushroom), vidvarāha, greasy milk of a cow during the first seven days of calving, vilaya (a particular product of milk) and mushrooms. By eating the small red variety of garlic, blossoms of kiṁśuka, a gourd, so also udumbara, bottle-gourd, a twice-born becomes fallen. He should also avoid kṛsara, cakes of wheat flour, and milky cakes, flesh (of a beast) not killed at a sacrifice, so also food prepared for deities and oblations, sour gruel, citron fruit, so also fish not killed at a rite; so also he should carefully avoid kadamba-flowers, wood-apple, figs; so also oil-cakes with oil taken out, and the grains offered to gods.

25-29a. At night he should carefully avoid curds with sesamum. He should not eat butter-milk with milk; he should not use prohibited food. He should avoid food impaired by worms, by thoughts, and having contact with earth; he should always avoid food spoiled by worms and insects and (prepared) by a

friend with suffering. He should avoid food smelt by a dog, recooked food and food seen by a cāṇḍāla; so also smelt by a woman in her menses, by the fallen ones or by a cow. He should always avoid the food that is not (properly) collected, stale and scattered; so also food that is touched by crows and cocks and containing worms; so also the food that is smelt even by human beings and touched by a leper.

29b-31a. He should not accept food given by a woman during the menses, an unchaste or a diseased woman, or by one who has put on a dirty garment. He should also avoid (using) another person's garment. Manu has said that the milk of a cow with no calf or a she-goat with a kid not more than ten days old, or of a sheep or a cow who has just taken the bull is not fit for drinking.

31b-46. He should not eat (the flesh of) a crane, a swan, a gallinule, a sparrow, a parrot, so also an osprey, a patridge, a goose, a cuckoo, crows, wagtails, a hawk, a vulture, so also an owl, a ruddy goose, a vulture (or a cock), a pigeon, a dove, a ṭiṭṭibha bird, a domestic cock, a lion, a tiger, a cat, a dog, a pig, a fox, a monkey and a donkey. He should not eat (the flesh of) serpents, deer, peacocks, aquatic animals, land-going animals. This is a settled rule. O best ones, Prajāpati Manu has said that these animals with five claws may be always eaten: alligator, tortoise, hare, rhinoceros, porcupine. He may also eat fish with scales, and the flesh of (the deer called) ruru after having presented them to deities and brāhmaṇas, and not otherwise. O best brāhmaṇas, so also (the flesh of) a peacock, a patridge, a pigeon, a cātaka, rhinoceros, a crane, a swan. Thus said Prajāpati (Manu). These fish, viz. (the glittering fish) śapharī, siṁhatuṇḍa, paṭhīna and rohita are directed as fit to be eaten. With a desire (to retain the status) as a twice-born he should eat the flesh of these after it is sprinkled over; even if he is about to lose his life he should duly use it. He should not at all eat flesh. He who eats what remains, is not smeared (with sin). If he is weak, he should eat flesh as medicine, or by an order or for sacrificial purposes. He, who would give up flesh when invited at a śrāddha or a rite in honour of a deity, goes to (i.e. lives) in hell for as many years as the number of hair of the beast. The settled (rule) is that the twice-born should not give or drink or

touch or see liquor. Therefore with all efforts he should always avoid liquor. Having drunk it he falls from his rites and would be unfit to be talked to. As long as a twice-born eats and drinks what is prohibited for eating or drinking and does not cast them down, he does not become entitled (to respect etc.). Therefore, a twice-born should, with effort, always avoid articles prohibited for eating and drinking. If he does (persist in eating or drinking) them, he goes to Raurava (hell).

CHAPTER FIFTYSEVEN

Acts of Charity Prescribed for a Householder

Vyāsa said :

1. I shall now explain to you the excellent merit of giving gifts, which was formerly told by Brahmā to the sages—the teachers of the Vedas.

2-30. The giving of proper objects with faith to a worthy recipient is designated as 'dāna' and gives the fruit of enjoyment and liberation. I take that to be 'datta' which is given with great faith to deserving persons. The rest he preserves for someone else. Dāna (giving gifts) is said to be of three kinds: obligatory, occasional, and optional. The fourth called vimala (i.e. pure) is said to be the best of all gifts. That gift which is everyday given to a brāhmaṇa who does not oblige and without desiring its fruit is said to be obligatory. That gift which is given into the hands of the learned for the appeasement of sin is said to be the excellent gift called 'occasional'. The sages who have thought about religious merit have called that gift which is given (for getting) a child, success, glory, happiness, as 'optional'. That gift which is given to those who know Vedas, to please the lord, and with a mind full of piety is pure and auspicious. Having secured a worthy recipient, he should, according to his capacity, resort to the merit due to gift. That worthy recipient whom he waits upon, protects him all round. That which is surplus in the food or garments of the family, should be given. If given otherwise, it

does not give the fruit of the gift. He should devoutly give (gifts) to a learned brāhmaṇa, one born in a noble family, one who is modest, one who is practising a vow, and one who is poor. He who devoutly gives land to a brāhmaṇa who has maintained the sacred fire, goes to the highest place, going where he does not grieve. He who gives land with sugarcanes (i.e. land where sugarcanes are growing), so also land with wheat (growing in it), to (a brāhmaṇa) learned in the Vedas, is not reborn. He who gives (a piece of) land, even of the measure of a cow's hide, to a poor brāhmaṇa, is freed from all sins. Here (i.e. in this world) there is no greater gift than the gift of land. Giving food is equal to that, and gift of knowledge (i.e. teaching) is superior to that. He who duly gives knowledge to a calm, pure, religious brāhmaṇa is honoured in Brahmā's heaven. A man should everyday give with devotion gold to a brahmacārī 'religious student'. Being freed from all sins, he would obtain the position of Brahman. By giving food to a householder a man obtains (its) fruit. Food alone should be given to him. By giving it the giver obtains the highest position. Observing a fast with his mind controlled, and being calm and pure, he should honour seven or five brāhmaṇas with black sesamum and especially with honey on the full moon day of Vaiśākha (saying), 'May Dharmarāja be pleased'; from the time he has this in mind, all the sin committed during his life time perishes in a moment. He who, having put sesamum seeds or gold, or honey or ghee on a hide of a black antelope, gives them to a brāhmaṇa, overcomes all sin. He who gives food with ghee, a jar with water to brāhmaṇas, especially on the full moon day of Vaiśākha, after having assigned it to Dharmarāja is freed from fear. He who pleases seven or five brāhmaṇas with water pots with gold and sesamum seeds, removes (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Being calm and fasting, wearing a white garment, a twice-born who gives on the twelfth day of the dark fortnight in the month of Māgha after offering sesamum seeds into fire, sesamum seeds only, to brāhmaṇas, overcomes all the sin that he has committed from his birth. When the new moon day arrives, he should give whatever little (he can) to a poor brāhmaṇa, dedicating it to Viṣṇu, the lord of gods, saying, 'May the ancient god Hṛṣīkeśa Viṣṇu be pleased.' That moment only his sin committed during the past seven births, perishes. He who would,

on the fourteenth day of the dark half, propitiate the trident-holder god (i.e. Śiva) through a brāhmaṇa, would not be re-born. Especially on the eighth day of the dark half, he having bathed and honoured a religious brāhmaṇa should, after washing his feet etc. duly give him his own wealth saying, 'May Śiva be pleased with me.'

31-43. Being freed from all sins, he obtains the highest position. Devoted twice-borns should worship Viṣṇu on the fourteenth day, or especially on the eighth day of the dark half, so also on the new moon day. He who observes a fast on the eleventh day, and would worship Viṣṇu through a brāhmaṇa, would go to the highest position. This day, the twelfth of the bright half, is called Vaiṣṇavī (i.e. sacred to Viṣṇu). On that day (a man) should carefully propitiate Viṣṇu. Whatever is given to a pure brāhmaṇa by dedicating it to lord Viṣṇu only, is said to have inexhaustible fruit. One who desires to propitiate a particular deity should honour brāhmaṇas. By that he would please that deity. Deities always dwell in the bodies of brāhmaṇas. Sometimes, when brāhmaṇas are not available, the deities are worshipped in their images etc. Desiring a fruit from them he should carefully worship the deities in images or especially in (i.e. represented by) brāhmaṇas everyday. He who desires power, should always worship Indra. He who longs for divine glory and knowledge, should worship Brahmā. He who desires good health (should worship) the Sun; he who longs for wealth, should worship Fire. He who desires success in undertakings, should worship Vināyaka. He who desires pleasures, should worship the Moon; he who longs for strength should worship the Wind. He who desires freedom from the worldly existence should carefully worship Viṣṇu. He who desires deep, abstract meditation, liberation and also divine knowledge, should carefully worship Śiva, the lord of gods. Those who desire great satisfaction worship Śiva and Viṣṇu. Giving water gives greater satisfaction than that.

44-55a. He who gives oil, gets desired progeny; the giver of a lamp gets excellent eye. The giver of land gets everything. One who gives gold gets long life. He who gives a house, obtains excellent houses; he who gives silver, gets excellent beauty. He, who gives a garment, lives in the same world as the Moon. The

giver of a horse gets an excellent vehicle. The giver of food gets the wealth desired by him; the giver of a cow obtains the world of Brahmā. The giver of a vehicle or a bed obtains a wife. He who grants fearlessness, obtains affluence. The giver of grains gets eternal happiness; he who gives (i.e. teaches) sacred text, reaches eternal Brahman. A man should give according to his capacity grains also to brāhmaṇas endowed with Vedic knowledge. After death he gets (i.e. goes to) heaven. By giving food to cows he is freed from all sins. By giving fuel a man has his fire kindled. He should always give fruits, roots, drinks and vegetables to brāhmaṇas. He should always be joyful. He who gives medicine, oil, food to a sick person for curing the disease, becomes free from diseases and happy and lives long. A man who gives an umbrella and sandals crosses the path that is sharp like a razor's edge leading to the hell Asipatravana and severe heat. He should give that, desiring that only eternally, to a virtuous person, which is most desired in the world and which is expected in the house. That which is given during the transition of one solstice to another, of the equinoctial point, at the time of the lunar or solar eclipses, or on a Saṁkrānti day etc., becomes inexhaustible. By giving (gifts) at sacred places like Prayāga, or at auspicious abodes, or at (the bank of) rivers and streams, he obtains inexhaustible (fruit).

55b-67. For beings there is no greater religious merit here than giving in charity. Therefore the twice-born should give (gifts) to a learned brāhmaṇa. In the same way he who desires his well-being, he who desires liberation, should give (gifts) to brāhmaṇas for (going to) heaven or for the destruction of his sins. He who, of an irreligious nature, would stop through folly, (gifts) being presented to brāhmaṇas, fire or gods, would go to the womb of an animal. A king should drive him, after forfeiting all his wealth, out of his country, who, having earned wealth, would not honour brāhmaṇas and gods. That brāhmaṇa who, at the time of famine, does not give food etc. to twice-born ones who are dying, stands condemned. (Brāhmaṇas) should not accept (gifts) from him and should not stay with him. The king should find out (facts about) him and drive him out of his country. He who later gives his wealth, the means of religious merit, to good people, is a greater sinner than those (mentioned) earlier, and

such a man is roasted in hell. O best brāhmaṇas, a man should give gifts to those brāhmaṇas who study the Vadas, are learned, have their senses controlled, are endowed with truthfulness and restraint. A man should feed a learned, religious brāhmaṇa, even though he has eaten (his meal), but not a fool, who does not behave properly (though he) has starved for ten days. He who, ignoring a learned brāhmaṇa who has approached him, gives (gifts to someone else), becomes sinful due to that act and burns his family to the seventh (descendant). If there is a brāhmaṇa who is superior in respect of good character or learning, he should exert to give him by bypassing (the brāhmaṇa that is) nearby. He who would accept what is honoured and would give just what is honoured—both these go to heaven; but (if the) reverse (is done) they go to hell.

68-78. A man knowing Dharma, should not give even water to an atheist, a sceptic, so also to all heretics and to one who does not know the Vedas. If a man who is not learned, would accept silver, gold, a cow, a horse, land, sesamum seeds, he is reduced to ashes like wood. An excellent brāhmaṇa should desire to get wealth from praiseworthy brāhmaṇas, even from kṣatriyas and vaiśyas, but never from śūdras. Seeking (i.e. he should seek) the contraction of his livelihood, (but) he should not long for enhancing his wealth. Attached to greed for wealth, he is deprived of his brāhmaṇahood. He would not obtain that position by studying all the Vedas and by fully accomplishing sacrifices, which he would obtain through contentment. He should not have a liking for accepting (gifts); he should not collect (a gift) from a śūdra. A brāhmaṇa who takes more (than necessary for) his maintenance, goes the downward path. He who is not contented, does not become fit for heaven. He afflicts people; he is like a thief. Desiring to emancipate his preceptor and servants he should gratify deities and guests, and should accept gifts from all (sources), but should never gratify himself. A householder who has thus controlled himself, and honours deities and guests, and who lives with a controlled mind, goes to that highest position. Entrusting his wife to his sons and going to the forest, the wise one, being neutral and composed should always move all alone. O best brāhmaṇas, I have told you this way of life of the householders. Knowing it one should follow it and make the

twice-born ones follow it. In this way he should, following the householder's way, continuously worship the only, eternal lord. Going beyond all births as creatures, he goes to the original cause and does not get another birth.

CHAPTER FIFTYEIGHT

Code of Conduct for an Anchorite

Vyāsa said :

1-4. Having thus remained in the householder's stage during the second part of his life, he should, with his wife and (the sacred) fire, resort to the third stage of life. Or, having entrusted his wife to his sons, he should go to a forest after seeing the child of his child (i.e. the grandchild) and when his body has become infirm. He, observing a vow and being calm, should practise penance after having gone to a forest in the forenoon (of a day) in the bright half of a month in the auspicious uttarāyaṇa (i.e. the summer solstice). He should everyday fetch for his food pure roots and fruits. With that which is his food, he should please the manes and deities.

5-15. He should everyday please the guests, and after bath he should worship gods. Being calm and getting eight morsels of food from his house, he should eat them. He should have matted hair and should not cut off his nails and hair. He should always recite sacred texts and refrain from talking about anything else. He should maintain the sacred fire and perform the five sacrifices with the various things that are produced (there) or with vegetables or roots or fruits; he should be clothed in bark and being pure should bathe thrice (a day). He should be compassionate towards all beings and should avoid accepting (gifts). A twice-born should always perform the new moon and full moon sacrifices. He should perform the seasonal sacrifice and also offer an oblation of the first fruits at the end of the rainy season and perform the cāturmāsya sacrifices (performed every four months, i.e. at the beginning of Kārtika, Phālguna

and Āṣāḍha). In the summer solstice and the winter solstice he should, in the proper order, perform sacrifices with products of the spring and the autumn seasons brought by himself, and should separately offer puroḍāśas and carūs. Having offered more auspicious oblations to deities and manes, he should eat the remaining, saline in taste and prepared by himself. He should avoid liquor and flesh and mushrooms growing on the ground. He should not eat fragrant or young grass, no fruits of śleṣmātaka, no products of ploughed land nor that which is abandoned by others. Even when he is sick he should not eat flowers and fruits growing in villages. He should always wait upon fire with rites as laid down in the Vedas. He should not bear malice against any being; he should be free from the pairs of opposites; he should be fearless. He should not eat anything at night, and should engage himself in meditation at night.

16-26a. He should control his senses, curb his anger and should think over the true nature of Brahman. He should always observe celibacy and should not even resort to (i.e. cohabit with) his wife. That twice-born, who, after having gone to the forest copulates at his will with his wife, has his vow lost, and he has to atone for it. The foetus (i.e. the child) that is born there (i.e. due to this copulation) should not be touched by twice-borns. He is not entitled to (the study of) the Vedas; the same is (the rule applicable to the members born) in his family. Intent on muttering the Gāyatrī-hymn, he should always sleep on the (bare) ground. He should protect all creatures, and should always give gifts to the good. He should avoid censure, telling lies, sleep, idleness. He should maintain one (sacred) fire; should be without an abode; and should resort to the ground that is sprinkled with water. Being restrained, he should move with animals and live with them only. Being calm, he should sleep on a stone or sand. He should cleanse (i.e. finish his stock) instantly or within a month, or should have the stock lasting for six months or for a year. Having collected food according to his capacity by day, he should eat it at night. He should eat every fourth time or eighth time, or should avoid (food) according to the cāndrāyaṇa vow in the bright and the dark fortnights. He should eat boiled gruel of barley once in every fortnight. Or he should, conforming to the creed of an anchorite,

subsist on the natural flowers, roots and fruits which are withered. He should roam about on the ground or stand on the fore-parts of his feet for a day.

26b-36. He should divert himself with (various) places and seats, and should never give up calmness. He should observe the vow of the five fires[1] in summer; should expose himself to the rain in rainy season; should put on wet clothes in winter. He should gradually increase his penance. He should bathe three times a day and should gratify his manes and deities. He should stand on one leg only, or should always drink the sun's ray. Or he should move in the smoke of the five fires, or should move in the heat or drink Soma. In the bright half he should drink milk and in dark half cow-dung. Or he should eat withered leaves or should live by bodily mortification. He should always engage himself in practising abstract meditation, or should always recite the Rudra (-hymn). He should study the Atharvaśiras, and should be intent on studying the Upaniṣads. He should carefully observe the restraints and vows. He should use the hide of a black antelope; should have an upper garment and a white sacred thread. Having put on the fires, he should be intent on meditating on his soul. An ascetic, not keeping the fire, having no abode, should be intent on (getting) salvation. Moving among ascetic twice-borns or among householders or other twice-borns moving in the forest, he should beg alms. Or getting it from the village, he should, living in the forest, eat eight morsels. He should eat from a leaf-vessel or from his hand or from a piece (of a pot etc.). He should mutter various Upaniṣadic hymns for self-realization; he should mutter particular incantations, Gāyatrī-hymn and Rudrādhyāya also. He should set out on the great journey (death) and stop taking food. Or following the religious commandment of offering himself to Brahman, he should enter fire.

1. Pañcatapas—An ascetic who in summer practises penance sitting in the middle of four fires with the sun burning right over his head.

CHAPTER FIFTYNINE

Rules of Conduct for a Sannyāsī

Vyāsa said:

1. Having thus lived in the stage of an anchorite for the third part of his life, he should gradually pass into the fourth stage of life in renunciation.

2-5. Having established the fires in the soul a twice-born would be a recluse. When he, engaged in the practice of abstract meditation, calm, intent on getting the knowledge of Brahman, has detachment in his mind for all objects, then (only) he should think of renouncing (the world). If reverse is the case, then he would fall. Having accomplished the Prājāpatya sacrifice (by giving away his own property) and the fire-sacrifice, he, being restrained, having put on a white or red garment should resort to the stage of the ascetic. Some are ascetics (following the path) of knowledge; some are ascetics (engaged in the study) of the Vedas; others are ascetics (following the path) of action. (Thus ascetics are said to be of three kinds.)

6-20a. He, who is free from everything, who is free from the pairs (like pleasure and pain), who is fearless and who is well-settled in himself is called *jñāna-sannyāsī.* He, who would be desireless and possessionless and would study the Vedas only, and desires salvation and has his senses controlled is called *Veda-sannyāsī.* The twice-born who having had fire in his possession, is intent on dedicating himself to Brahman and on performing great sacrifices, should be known as *karma-sannyāsī.* Of these three, the *jñāna-sannyāsī* is regarded as superior. For him, the wise one, there is nothing to be done nor does he have any mark. Free from the feeling of mine-ness, being fearless, calm, free from the pairs, subsisting on leaves, wearing an old strip to cover his private parts, or remaining naked he is engaged in meditation. He, a celibate, with his diet controlled, should fetch his food from the village. Being indifferent and desireless he should remain taking delight in the supreme spirit. He should move in this world for happiness with the help of his own soul (i.e. all alone). He should not desire death, nor should he desire life. He should wait for

death only as a servant waits for (his master's order). He should not study; should not engage himself (in any pursuit); should never listen (to anything). A meditating saint, who thus looks upon knowledge as the highest thing is fit for absorption into Brahman. The wise one should have one garment (only) or a small strip to cover (his private parts); should be clean-shaven or should have a lock of hair on the crown of his head; should be tridaṇḍī and should have no possession; (or) should put on a red garment and always engage himself in deep meditation. He should live near a village, at the root of a tree or in a temple. He should be equal to his enemy or friend, so also (look equally upon) respect and insult. He should always subsist by begging, and should never eat from one place. For an ascetic who, through delusion or for some other reason, eats from one place only, no explation is seen in the religious texts. He should be detached from love or hatred; should look equally upon a clod or stone or gold; should abstrain from harming creatures, should observe the vow of silence and should be fully desireless. He should plant his foot kept pure by sight (i.e. watching that no impurity is contracted); should drink after it is filtered through a cloth; he should talk words that are purified by truth; and should behave in a way which is approved by his conscience.

20b-27a. Except in the rainy season a mendicant should not stay at one place (for a long time). Bathing everyday and being pure and virtuous, having a water-pot in his hand, he should always be engrossed in celibacy and be interested in living in a forest. If he is engaged in (reading) scriptures (leading to) salvation, is invested with the sacred thread, has his senses controlled, if he is free from religious hypocrisy and pride, and is free from censuring others and from wickedness, is endowed with the quality of the knowledge of the soul, he would obtain salvation. He should constantly meditate on the eternal deity called 'Om'. After having bathed and sipped water according to the proper rite and being pure, he, invested with the sacred thread, with his mind tranquil, with kuśas in his hand, with his red garment washed, with the hair (on his body) covered with ashes, should mutter hymns about the principal sacrifice or the presiding deity or the highest soul or whatever is said in the

Upaniṣads. Or the restrained ascetic, being a celibate, should live among his sons. He should everyday study the Vedas, (then) he goes to the highest position.

27b-31. These are his special vows : harmlessness, truth, non-stealing, celibacy, austerities, forgiveness, kindness, and contentment; or he should, having faith in the Upaniṣadic knowledge and being calm, and having bathed, should perform the five sacrifices everyday; and desiring alms, and being tranquil, should, from time to time, mutter the sacrificial hymns. He should everyday do sacred study, and should mutter the Gāyatrī-hymn at both the twilights. He should constantly meditate upon the absolute lord. He should always avoid food from one place, so also lust, wrath and possessions; he should wear one garment, or two garments; he should have a lock of hair on the crown of his head; he should be invested with a sacred thread; the wise man having the tridaṇḍa in his hand goes to that highest Brahman.

CHAPTER SIXTY

Restraints for a Sannyāsī

Vyāsa said:

1-15. Thus the livelihood of the sages who have controlled themselves and are in the (fourth) stage of life is said to be (had) by means of begging or fruits and roots. He should beg for one time only; he should not be attached to expansion (of begging). An ascetic attached to begging, becomes also attached to objects of senses. He should beg from seven houses. He should not move again (for alms) if he does not get it (during the first round). An ascetic should wait (for alms at a door) with his face hung down for the time required for milking a cow. Saying, 'Alms (please)', he, pure and controlled in speech, should remain silent. The man, having washed his hands and feet and sipped water according to proper rite, and having presented the food to the sun, facing the east, should eat it. Having offered oblations to

the five vital airs, he, being calm, should eat eight morsels. Having sipped water, he should meditate upon the highest lord, Brahma. Manu Prajāpati has mentioned four (kinds of) pots for an ascetic: pumpkin gourd, wooden, made of clay and of bamboo. Before the fall of night, at midnight, during the last part of the night, he should everyday meditate upon the lord with special hymns at the twilights, after bringing to the lotus of his heart the lord called Viśva, the source of everything, the soul of all creatures dwelling beyond the darkness, the prop of all, the unmanifest, the joy, the immutable light, the one beyond Prakṛti and Puruṣa, the ether, fire and the auspicious one, that essence of all beings, the god of the form of Brahman. At the end of Oṁkāra, and having offered himself into the highest soul, he should meditate upon the lord, the ruler, living in the midst of the sky. He, meditating upon the ancient Puruṣa Viṣṇu, the cause of all objects and the only receptacle of joy, would be free from bondage. Or he should meditate in the heart, (on) the primal nature, the only cause of all beings, the abode of the illusion of the world, the life of all beings, where the world merges. The subtle joy of Brahman which those desiring salvation obtain, in that is placed Brahman—absolute and having knowledge as its characteristic. Having thought over the endless, true lord he should remain controlled in speech.

16-28a. This is said to be the most secret knowledge for the ascetics. He who always remains in this obtains the contemplation of the Supreme Spirit. Therefore, he should always be intent upon (securing) knowledge, should be greatly devoted to metaphysical knowledge, should study the Brahmanic knowledge, by which he becomes free from bondage. Regarding his being separate from all (else), he should meditate upon the absolute joy, the immutable one and the knowledge which is beyond that. Beyond that, from whom the beings originate, and knowing whom a man is not born here (i.e. in this world), stands one, the lord, the ruler. The man's entering him is eternal, auspicious and unchanging. He that is away from this is the lord, the great god. For the violation of each of the vows laid down for the ascetics and other vows an expiation is enjoined. A man having through lust, gone to (i.e. cohabited with) a woman, should being

calm and pure practise the expiation called Kṛcchra-sāntapana,[1] along with the restraining of his breath. Then, with his mind controlled, the ascetic should practise bodily mortification; and then having again come back to the hermitage, he should behave carefully. Falsehood that is not against Dharma, is not harmful—so say the wise. Yet such a horrible attachment should not be indulged in. An ascetic desiring religious merit, should observe fast for a night, and practise the restraint of breath a hundred times after having told a lie. Even if he is in a great calamity he should not steal (a thing) from others. The Smṛti says that there is no worse sin than stealing. Doing harm to others, extreme avidity, solicitation destroy the knowledge of the soul. That which is (called) wealth, is the outward life. He, whose wealth a man snatches, takes away his life.

28b-40. The ascetic of a wicked mind, violating his (usual) mode of life, and fallen from his vow, being again depressed, should behave carefully. If an ascetic would cause harm accidentally, he should perform the expiation (called) Atikṛcchra[2] or Cāndrāyaṇa[3]. If through the weakness of his senses, he emits (semen) on seeing a woman, he should have the sixteen kinds of restraints of breath. The wise go through the restraint of breath a hundred times for three nights if there is an emission by day. The expiation called Prājāpatya[4] is enjoined for taking food from one (house only), (eating) honey and flesh at the first śrāddha and on actually cognizing salt (*pratyakṣalavaṇaḥ*). All the sin of him who is always given to meditation, perishes. Therefore, a man should meditate upon Viṣṇu and be engaged in meditating upon him. He the great god should be known—that

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1. Kṛcchra-sāntapana : Drinking the mixture of cow's urine, cowdung, milk, curd, ghee, water (flowing) from kuśa, and fastting the next day. (See Manu. 11.212)

2. Atikṛcchra : Eating one morsel for three days in the morning, three days in the evening, and eating whatever is obtained without begging for three days, and fasting for the remaining three days. (See Manu. 11.213)

3. Cāndrāyaṇa : Bathing thrice a day, reducing one morsel on each day of the dark fortnight, and increasing one morsel on each day of the bright fortnight. (See Manu. 11.217)

4. Prājāpatya : Eating for three days in the morning, three days in the evening, and three days without begging. (See Manu. 11.211)

is the highest light of Brahman, that has entered the indestructible and the immutable, and that is the inner soul, the highest Brahman. That alone is the indestructible, unchangeable, eternal, highest position. So he is worshipped and is called Mahādeva, in his abode called knowledge, the highest principle due to his contact with the soul. He does not recognize any other god than Mahādeva. He, who follows him—the soul—goes to the highest position. Those who regard themselves as different from the lord, do not realize that absolute highest Brahman, the indestructible principle. That god is Mahādeva. Knowing this, he is not bound. Therefore, an ascetic, with his mind restrained, engaged in (obtaining) knowledge and deep meditation, calm, and devoted to Mahādeva, should strive.

41-43. O brāhmaṇas, I have described to you the auspicious stage (i.e. the way of life) of the ascetics, which was formerly told by the lord, the sage, viz. the Grandsire. A man should not give this auspicious knowledge about the way of life of ascetics, told by the Self-born one, to him who is not his son, or disciple or a meditating sage. Thus is made the statement about the restraints of an ascetic, which would be the only cause of the joy of the best of gods. Those whose minds are set upon (the lord) are neither born nor do they perish.

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

Devotion to Viṣṇu the Best Way to Salvation

Sūta said:

1-2a. Thus Vyāsa of immeasurable lustre spoke to the brāhmaṇas. Having said this much, having cheered up all the sages, the revered Vyāsa, the son of Satyavatī, went as he had come.

2b-8a. I have told you the rules about the castes and the stages of life. Having done this only, a man becomes dear to Viṣṇu, not otherwise. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall tell you the

secret about it. Listen. O brāhmaṇas, the duties regarding castes and stages that were told now, are not equal even to the sixteenth part of the devotion to Viṣṇu in this world. In Kaliyuga only devotion to Hari is to be achieved. A man has to practise the duties in the other yuga. That religious man who keeping god Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu, Hṛṣīkeśa, invoked by many, the ancient one, the great and the tranquil one, in his heart worships him, has conquered (all) the three worlds. A brāhmaṇa, having drunk the nectar of the devotion to Viṣṇu, has overcome the bite of the serpent of Kali-age, the blemish, the Kālakūṭa (poison).

8b-13a. What is the use of muttering (the names of other deities) if men (just) utter the name of Viṣṇu? What is the use of (holy) baths for him who has held the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet on his head? What is the use of a sacrifice for him who has held the lotus-like feet of Hari in (i.e. to) his heart? What is the use of giving (gifts) for him, if he has narrated the deeds of Viṣṇu in an assembly? He who, having heard about the multitudes of Viṣṇu's virtues, would again and again be delighted, gets the same state as he whose mind is fixed on Kṛṣṇa and is delighted through profound meditation. Those that bring in obstacles in it are said to be talking heretic and fraudulent things; the women who are in their company also obstruct devotion to Viṣṇu. The command given by the eyes of women cannot be overruled even by gods. He who has overcome it, is called Viṣṇu's devotee in the world.

13b-20. Even sages longing for the acts of women, become mad. O brāhmaṇas, where can there be devotion for Viṣṇu for those who are fond of women? O brāhmaṇas, they are demonesses moving in the guise of beautiful women; for they constantly eat up the minds of men. As long as there is no movement of the fickle eyes of a woman an art or science is effective, knowledge proceeds, the intellect grasping all sacred texts is very pure, muttering is (possible), resorting to sacred places is done, the preceptor is served, there is a desire to cross (the mundane existence), awakening takes place, discrimination is possible, there is a liking for the company of the good, there is a desire for (listening to) the Purāṇas. (Otherwise) O brāhmaṇas, a man would fall; and all dharmas would disappear. In the case of those who are favoured

with a little (portion) of the honey of the lotuses in the form of Viṣṇu's feet, the casting of the fickle glances of women is not powerful. Those, O brāhmaṇas, who have birth after birth served Viṣṇu, have given gift to brāhmaṇas, have offered oblations into fire, have been detached from that (i.e. being allured by women).

21-36. What indeed is said to be the beauty of women, is described as the lustre of their ornaments and garments. Why is the beauty of women described to be without love and knowledge of self? For, it is indeed the body possessing pus, urine, feces, blood, skin, marrow, bones and fat. Thinking it to be different in this way, a man having touched it would be pure after having bathed. O brāhmaṇas, the body formed by those (i.e. bones, marrow etc.) is found beautiful by men. Oh, what a bad condition of people, which is brought about by (their) misfortune, that a man proceeds, knowing that one without breasts is a man and one (with breasts is) a woman! On (proper) thought, what is a man and what is a woman? Therefore, a good man should, by all means, avoid the company of a woman. Who, on the earth, obtains success after having met with a woman? A man should avoid contact with a woman and with one who keeps contact with her. It is seen that her company is actually Raurava. People are greedy due to ignorance; and for that reason they are duped by destiny. A man would be roasted in the vulva of a woman—a hellish pit. He would again find delight in that (hell) from which he has come to the earth! Men take delight in that from which everyday urine and semen rising from filth come out. Who then would be impure due to that? In this world there is great trouble there (i.e. in the union with a woman). Oh, the mockery (done by) destiny! Again and again a man takes delight there (i.e. in the union with a woman). Oh, the shamelessness of men! Therefore, a wise man should think over the many multitudes of the faults of women. Due to coitus there is a loss of strength; and sleep becomes very young (i.e. overpowering). Due to his knowledge snatched away by sleep a man becomes short-lived. Therefore, a wise man should, with effort, look upon a woman as his death, and the wise one should cause his mind to seek delight in the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu. Which great fool, leaving the service of the feet of Viṣṇu that gives pleasure in this world and in the

next, would serve the feet of a woman? The service of the feet of Viṣṇu causes absence of rebirth, (while) serving a woman's vulva (i.e. cohabiting with a woman) brings about the danger of (re-) birth. He would repeatedly fall into the womb (i.e. would be reborn) as one who is cooked out of a machine. He would again long for her and that would be his mortification.

37-48a. With my hands raised I am speaking. Listen to my important words. Put your heart into Viṣṇu, and not into the vulva (i.e. a woman) causing torment. That man who lives by avoiding union with a woman, obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice at every step. There is no doubt that the lord of the world is pleased with him who through good luck has married a pious woman belonging to a noble family and avoids union with her after having produced a son on her. The pious ones declare that union with a woman is a bad union. When it is there, firm devotion to Viṣṇu comes never. Giving up all (others) attachments, he should entertain devotion to Viṣṇu. In my opinion devotion to Viṣṇu is difficult to get. There is no doubt that he who is devoted to Viṣṇu is happy. He should do that deed only which pleases Viṣṇu. When he is satisfied, the world is satisfied. When he is pleased, the world is pleased. The existence of human beings is declared to be fruitless without devotion to Viṣṇu. Which man would not serve that unmanifest Viṣṇu whom gods like Brahmā and Śiva worship for pleasing him? The mother of him who keeps the pair of the feet of Viṣṇu in his heart, is very fortunate; (so also) his father is very blessed. Those men who say, 'O Viṣṇu, venerable to the world, affectionate towards those who seek your refuge' do not go to hell. Brāhmaṇas are especially the actual forms of Viṣṇu. With those who worship them suitably, Viṣṇu is pleased.

48b-72a. Viṣṇu would move (i.e. moves) over this earth in the form of a brāhmaṇa. Without a brāhmaṇa no rite is ever successful. Those who have devoutly put the water (flowing) from the feet of a brāhmaṇa on their heads, have gratified their dead ancestors and have also liberated their own soul. That sweet thing which is put into the mouths of brāhmaṇas is actually given into the mouth of Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu himself enjoys it. Such people who worship Viṣṇu in his images etc. when he is actually seen in the form of a brāhmaṇa, are rare. That act (of

worshipping his image) is (to be done) when he (i.e. a brāhmaṇa) is not available. The earth is declared to be blessed due to its being the abode of brāhmaṇas. Whatever is offered into their hands, is offered into the hand of Viṣṇu. By salutation made to them wickedness disappears. By saluting a brāhmaṇa, a man is freed from sins like killing a brāhmaṇa. Therefore, good men should propitiate a brāhmaṇa after looking upon him as Viṣṇu. If something is given into the mouth of a hungry brāhmaṇa (by a men), he is sprinkled for crores of kalpas with streams of nectar after death (i.e. in heaven). The mouth of a brāhmaṇa is a great holy place which is not a barren spot with saline soil and which is without thorns. If something is sown there (by a man), he would obtain crore times the fruit. He who gives him (i.e. a brāhmaṇa) food of various kinds to please a brāhmaṇa (goes to) worlds full of great pleasures giving freedom till the end of crores of kalpas. He should, after honouring a brāhmaṇa, daily listen to a Purāṇa which is narrated by a brāhmaṇa and which is wild fire to (the forest of) sins. Of all the holy places, Purāṇa is said to be the best holy place, by hearing even a part of which Viṣṇu himself is pleased. As Viṣṇu taking up the form of the sun, moves for giving light to all the worlds, similarly for enlightening you Viṣṇu, in the form of a Purāṇa, moves among the beings. A Purāṇa is extremely sanctifying. Therefore, if one has a mind to generate (in himself) love for Viṣṇu, men should constantly listen to a Purāṇa, of the form of Viṣṇu. A tranquil devotee of Viṣṇu should listen to the narration of a Purāṇa, which is difficult to be had, which is spotless and which very much removes blemishes. A man should look upon it as the highest, since, O brāhmaṇas, having collected the significance of the Vedas, Viṣṇu, in the form of Vyāsa, created the Purāṇa. In the Purāṇa, piety is defined; and Keśava himself is piety. Therefore, when the Purāṇa is heard a man would become (one with) Viṣṇu. Hari (i.e. Viṣnu) himself is a brāhmaṇa and Purāṇa also is like that. Having the contact of these two a man would be Viṣṇu himself. So also he could destroy his sin by sprinkling the water of Gaṅgā (over himself). Viṣṇu, in the liquid form liberates the earth. If a devotee of Viṣṇu in desirous of singing songs of Viṣṇu, he should have the sprinkling of (i.e. bath in) the water of Gaṅgā, which is pure and which purifies

(all other objects). The goddess Gaṅgā is said to cause devotion to Viṣṇu on the earth. That Gaṅgā is of the nature of Viṣṇu, and is the cause of the expansion of the world. A man should have devotion without any motive to brāhmaṇas, Purāṇas, Gaṅgā, cows and pippala (tree) looking upon them as Viṣṇu. The wise ones have determined these to be actually of the nature of Viṣṇu.

72b-87a. Therefore, he who longs for devotion to Viṣṇu should honour these. The existence of men is said to be fruitless without devotion to Viṣṇu. Men resorting to the boat in the form of devotion to Viṣṇu cross (the ocean of worldly existence) which has the mass of the water in the form of the Kali-age, which is full of the alligators in the form of sins, which has the eddies in the form of indulgence in the objects of senses, which has abundant foam in the form of wrong knowledge, very severe on account of the great snakes in the form of wicked people, which is fearful and difficult to cross. Therefore, people should try to secure devotion to Viṣṇu. What pleasure does a creature obtain by enjoying in a false profession (when) he does not adhere to the playful account of Viṣṇu of wonderful sport? If the mind of men clings to the objects of senses, then they should listen to the wonderful stories about Viṣṇu which are mixed up with many (sensuous) objects. O brāhmaṇas, even if (they have fixed) their heart on (securing) salvation they should hear (stories about him). Even if they are casually heard, Viṣṇu would be pleased. Viṣṇu, affectionate to his devotees, though inactive, performed many acts for the well-being of his obedient devotees. He is not so (well) pleased by rites like a hundred Vājapeya sacrifices or a myriad Rājasūyas, as he is by devotion. Resort to the feet of Viṣṇu, which should be mentally resorted to, which were repeatedly resorted to by the good, and which are essential for crossing the ocean of mundane existence. O you wicked, cruel men, who are greedy for objects of senses, why do you yourself throw yourselves into Raurava (hell)? (The fall into hell) will come without resorting (i.e. if men do not resort) to the auspicious feet of Viṣṇu. If you desire to overcome your worries without any effort, then resort to the feet of Viṣṇu for not being reborn (i.e. to avoid rebirth). After thinking about where-

from a mortal has come and whereto he would go, an intelligent man should collect religious merit. (Even) if a man has risen after having fallen into many hells, and after having got bodies of the immobile gets manhood (i.e. gets birth as a man, yet) there (also) remaining in the womb (of the mother) is extremely painful.

87b-103. O Brāhmaṇas, if due to the inevitable consequence of his deeds a creature is born on the earth, he is afflicted by many blemishes like childhood. Having reached youth he is very much oppressed by poverty, or by a severe disease or by drought etc. also. A man would have indescribable trouble due to old age, or due to the mind's wandering here and there, or due to a disease. Then he would meet with death. Even in the mundane existence no greater grief than that is experienced. Then due to the inevitable result of his deeds a being is throubled in Yama's world. Experiencing severe tortures there, he is born again. A creature is born; he dies. He dies; he is again born. Such is the condition (of a man) when the feet of Viṣṇu are not worshipped (by him). Death without trouble or life without difficulty does not take place in the case of him who has not worshipped Viṣṇu. If there is wealth in the house what is the use of (just) preserving it? Would his wealth follow him when he is dragged by the messengers of Yama? Therefore, wealth given to brāhmaṇas after honouring them gives all pleasure. Giving (gifts) is a staircase leading to heaven; giving (gifts) destroys sins. Resorting devoutly to Viṣṇu increases great religious merit. If there is strength in a mortal he should not uselessly waste it. He should carefully dance and sing in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu. Whatever men possess, they should dedicate it to Viṣṇu. What is dedicated to Viṣṇu gives happiness; but what is dedicated to someone else gives misery. By means of his eyes a man should observe the image etc. of Viṣṇu only. With his ears he should day and night hear the meritorious names of Viṣṇu. With their tongue the wise ones should taste the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu. With their nose they should smell the tulasī-leaf (put) at the feet of Viṣṇu. Having touched with his skin Viṣṇu's devotee and having with his mind meditated upon his feet a man becomes blessed. No doubt should be raised about this. A wise man should set his mind upon him; similarly he should

have him in his heart. Men ultimately reach him only. No doubt should be raised about this. Which man would not resort to that beginningless and endless Viṣṇu who gives his own position if he is merely thought of in mind? A man should constantly fix his heart on Viṣṇu's lotus-like feet. To please him he should, according to his capacity, salute him, think about and take delight in him. He should think of his two feet. Such a man alone would get respect in the world.

CHAPTER SIXTYTWO

The Merit of Reciting the Padma Purāṇa, Svargakhaṇḍa

Sūta said :

1-8a. Thus is the greatness of that highest lord Viṣṇu, taking up many forms, (Viṣṇu—) who is the cause of complete liberation in the world. One of the forms is the great *Padma* (*Purāṇa*). The *Brahma* (*Purāṇa*) is the head of Viṣṇu only. His heart is called *Padma*. The *Viṣṇu* (*Purāṇa*) is his right arm. The *Śaiva* (*Purāṇa*) is the left arm of the great lord. The *Bhāgavata* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be his thighs. The *Nāradīya* (*Purāṇa*) is his navel. The *Mārkaṇḍeya* (*Purāṇa*) is his right foot; the *Agni* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be (his) left foot. The *Bhaviṣya* (*Purāṇa*) is the right knee of the magnanimous Viṣṇu only. The (Purāṇa) called *Brahmavaivarta* is said to be his left knee. The *Liṅga* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be the right ankle and the *Varāha* is the left ankle. The *Skanda Purāṇa* is the hair, and the *Vāmana* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be his skin. The *Kūrma* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be his back; the *Matsya* is said to his fat. The *Garuḍa* (*Purāṇa*) is said to be his marrow; the *Brahmāṇḍa* is said to be his bone(s). Thus Viṣṇu was having the Purāṇas as parts of his body. *Padma* there (i.e. in the body) is the heart, having heard which a man obtains nectar (i.e. immortality).

8b-9. God Viṣṇu himself became (i.e. turned himself into) this *Padma Puraṇa*, having taught one chapter of which a man is freed from all sins. There (i.e. of the *Padma Purāṇa*) this

Svargakhaṇḍa gives the fruit of the entire *Padma*. Having heard the *Svargakhaṇḍa* even those who are great sinners are freed from sins as the serpents are free from their skins.

10-18. A man who hears this first (or best) *Svargakhaṇḍa* gets the same fruit even if he is extremely wicked and expelled from all religions. As a man having bathed at Prayāga in the month of Māgha is free from sins, similarly he would be free from sins by hearing (the *Ādi Svargakhaṇḍa*). He who has heard, and made (others) hear this *Ādikhaṇḍa* has given gold (equal to his own) weight, and has given the entire earth. He has given a gift to a poor man of the debt which he incurred; he has repeatedly recited the thousands of the names of Viṣṇu; he has studied all the Vedas, and has similarly performed all rites; he has settled teachers by giving them livelihood. O brāhmaṇas, he has also granted fearlessness to the people that were frightened; he has sought the consent of the virtuous, wise and pious persons. He has given very cold (water) between (i.e. during the period between) the sign of Aries and the sign of Cancer; he has also cast his life for brāhmaṇas and cows; He, the wise one, has also performed other good deeds.

19-25. Having well studied (i.e. if he studies well) the *Svargakhaṇḍa*, he obtains many pleasures. He, who has slept well, is awakened by women in his harem, by means of good (i.e. sweet) sounds of small bells and with sweet words. He enjoys half of Indra's seat and would live for a long time in Indra's heaven. From there he would go to the Sun's abode and then to the world of the Moon. Then enjoying pleasures in the abode of the Seven Sages, he goes to Dhruva, thence to Brahmā's world, and obtains a lustrous body. Having secured knowledge there only, he goes to (i.e. obtains) salvation. The wise one would live with the good, and would bathe at a holy place. The man would talk pious words and would listen to holy texts. (Among them) *Padma* (i.e. the *Padma Purāṇa*) is a great holy text, and gives the fruit of all the Vedas. In it *Svargakhaṇḍa* gives great religious merit. O people, if you want to cross easily the waves of longings, then resort to Viṣṇu, salute Viṣṇu, the only excellent god; you will go to worlds of very pure pleasures. Listen and utter the incomparable name of Viṣṇu. Obtain your desired objects.

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PADMA-PURĀṆA

PART V

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY

Dr. N.A. DESHPANDE

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

But he has neither the means nor the leisure to embark on that course. We have, therefore, planned to help him acquire knowledge by an easier course. We have started the series of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology in English Translation. Our goal is to universalize knowledge through the most popular international medium of expression. The publication of the Purāṇas in English Translation is a step towards that goal.

PREFACE

This is Part V of the voluminous *Padma Purāṇa* and Volume 43 in the series of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology. It comprises the whole of section IV named *Brahmakhaṇḍa* (chapters 1-26) and part of Section V named *Pātālakhaṇḍa* (chapters 1-67).

Let us here give a brief outline of the contents of this part.

The *Brahmakhaṇḍa* deals mainly with various aspects of *Viṣṇu Bhakti* or devotion to god Viṣṇu. Out of its 26 chapters as many as 19 preach devotion to Viṣṇu directly in most and indirectly in a few, strengthening it with the help of short anecdotes and stories.

Devotion to Viṣṇu is recommended as the quickest and surest way to liberation in this Kali age. No pilgrimage, no bathing in Gaṅgā, in short, nothing else need be done by such a devotee. The characteristics of a devotee of Viṣṇu are described in vv. 21-32 of chapter 1. The story of a thief named Daṇḍaka shows how a solitary and insignificant act performed once destroyed even his gravest sins committed in the past, and the one of a pious brāhmaṇa Vaikuṇṭha and a rat shows how an accidental act of brightening the flame of a lamp burning in a Viṣṇu temple on the part of the rat liberated it.

Observing a fast on a *Jayantī* day is strongly advised. The merits thereof and awful results incurred by its non-observance are described in detail. Six meritorious *Jayantīs* are mentioned, *Kṛṣṇajanmāṣṭamī* and *Rādhāṣṭamī* being the two most prominent ones.

Ekādaśī is said to be Viṣṇu's day and importance of fasting on this day is greatly emphasized. Various means of winning the favour of god Viṣṇu are described in chapter 16.

Worship of Tulasī plant, offering its leaves to the deity, wearing a rosary of Tulasī wood round one's neck and a garland of Tulasī leaves are praised as highly efficacious in destroying one's sins and freeing oneself from the clutches of Yama's

messengers. Uttering Viṣṇu's name is regarded highly meritorious and leading to Vaikuṇṭha.

Some minor themes of this Section include deeds responsible for sonlessness, birth of a daughter, of a good son, and for stillbirth; churning of the ocean as initiated by a curse of sage Durvāsa who is reputed to become furious for very flimsy reasons; protection offered to a brāhmaṇa as highly meritorious, illustrated by the story of sage Viśvāmitra and how he averted a tragedy by offering himself as a victim in a *Naramedha* sacrifice in place of a brāhmaṇa boy; purificatory acts recommended for saving oneself from sins incurred by indulging in illicit intercourse and eating feces, drinking urine, sipping wine etc.; and importance of keeping a promise.

The *Pātālakhaṇḍa* devotes its first 68 chapters to the ever well-known *Rāmāyaṇa* story, out of which all but the last are included in this Part. This is a Vaiṣṇava theme par excellence, as Rāma was an incarnation of Viṣṇu born for the divine purpose of eliminating the demons headed by Rāvaṇa.

Most of these chapters from Eight onwards describe Rāma's Horse Sacrifice. Chapters 12-53 narrate a number of interesting episodes associated with the Horse's journey over the whole of the earth, including the various thrilling battles that Śatrughna's army had to fight to free the Horse from the rival kings who for some reason came to challenge the supremacy of Rāma. In chapter 54 the ascetic boy Lava binds the Horse, and chapters 60-66 describe the crushing defeat suffered by Śatrughna's army at the hands of the two ascetic brothers Kuśa and Lava.

Incidentally, chapters 55-59 describe the washerman's scandalous talk about Sītā heard and reported to Rāma by the spies and the consequent banishment of Sītā and birth of Kuśa and Lava in the hermitage of sage Vālmīki under his own loving care, who at an appropriate moment discloses the identity of the two sons of Sītā to Rāma who then owns them as his heirs. Sītā after a lot of persuasion returns to Rāma and the Horse Sacrifice is happily concluded even without the victim who miraculously gives up his equine form at Rāma's touch and assumes a divine form.

Acknowledgements

It is our pleasant duty to put on record our sincere thanks to Dr. R.N. Dandekar and the UNESCO authorities for their kind encouragement and valuable help which render this work more useful than it would otherwise have been. We are extremely grateful to Dr. N.A. Deshpande for translating the text. We are also thankful to all those who have been helpful in our project.

—*Editor*

CONTENTS

SECTION V: PĀTĀLAKHAṆḌA

ABBREVIATIONS

Common and self-evident abbreviations such as Ch(s)—Chapter(s), p—page, pp—pages, V—Verse, VV—Verses, Ftn—footnote, Hist. Ind. Philo.—History of Indian Philosophy are not included in this list.

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona
AGP	S.M. Ali's *The Geography of Purāṇas*, PPH, New Delhi, 1973
AIHT	*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F. E. Pargiter, Motilal Banarsidass (MLBD), Delhi
AITM	*Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* Series, MLBD, Delhi
AP	*Agni Purāṇa*, Guru Mandal Edition (GM), Calcutta, 1957
Arch. S.Rep.	Archaeological Survey Report
AV	*Atharva Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Bd. P.	*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, MLBD, Delhi 1973
BG	*Bhagavadgītā*
Bh. P.	*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad
Br.	*Brāhmaṇa* (preceded by name such as Śatapatha)
BS. P.	*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Vishnu Shastri Bapat, Wai
BV. P.	*Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*, GM, 1955-57
CC	*Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi* by Hemādri
CVS	*Caraṇa Vyūha Sūtra* by Śaunaka, Com. by Mahidāsa
DB	*Devī Bhāgavata*, GM, 1960-61
De or GDAMI	*The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, N.L. De, Oriental Reprint, Delhi, 1971
Dh. S.	*Dharma Sūtra* (preceded by the author's name such as Gautama)
ERE	*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* by Hastings
GP	*Garuḍa Purāṇa,* ed. R. S. Bhattacharya, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1964

GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P.V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varanasi, 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇi*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	Monier Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	*Nāradīya* or *Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣīya Prācīna Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd. P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English version, MLBD, Delhi, 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, R. C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Śat. Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā* by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

IV BRAHMAKHAṆḌA

(Section on Brahman)

CHAPTER ONE

Who Are the Devotees of Viṣṇu?

Salutation to Śrī Vedavyāsa

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, now that the Kali age has arrived, tell me, by means of which acts a being would be liberated from that (mundane existence).

Sūta said:

2-4. Well (asked), well (asked), O best of sages, you are the best among the righteous people. You constantly desire the well-being of all people. O you devotee of Viṣṇu, listen to what Vyāsa, the omniscient brāhmaṇa, revered by all, said, when he was formerly asked by Jaimini. The best sage (Jaimini), having prostrated himself like a staff before preceptor Vyāsa, Satyavatī's son, who had mastered everything, asked him:

Jaimini said:

5. Tell me how even with little religious merit people will obtain salvation in the Kali age, since they are short-lived.

Vyāsa said :

6. O lord, O brāhmaṇa, due to the contact with the good there would be the listening to (i.e. a man would listen to) the sacred texts. Due to that there would be (i.e. arise) devotion to Viṣṇu. Knowledge (would follow) from that, and (best) position (i.e. liberation) from that (knowledge).

7. The account of Viṣṇu is not liked by the most sinful man on the earth. Such a brāhmaṇa should be known (i.e. looked upon) as the most sinful (man).

8-13. A devotee of Viṣṇu is delighted on hearing the account of Śrīkṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). He who describes it to be false should be known as the greatest (i.e. worst) among the sinners. O brāhmaṇa, the lord of the world does not leave that place where the account of Kṛṣṇa is (being narrated), and does not at any time go (anywhere else). For a man who would create an obstacle in the act of the narration of Viṣṇu's account, there is no escape from hell for a hundred period of Manu. For those who, having heard the account (as narrated) in the Purāṇas, censure or scoff at it, always have the very afflicting hells on their hands (i.e. waiting for them). The sin earned in the previous existences (of him) who desires to listen to the account of Śrīkṛṣṇa, perishes just at that moment only. I do not know what (best) position the man who would devoutly listen to Śrīkṛṣṇa's account will have on hearing it.

14-16. All such (blemishes) of the sinner as the sin due to the murder of a brāhmaṇa, untimely death, and also (the sin due to) drinking liquor, perish. The sin of that man who (first) having committed a sin later keeps (himself) away from it, would perish as the heap of cotton perishes (i.e. is burnt) by fire. O brāhmaṇa, Yama's servants do not come near the house of him in whose house there is the book (containing) the account of Śrīkṛṣṇa.

Jaimini said:

17. O preceptor, tell me, whom do they describe as the devotees of Viṣṇu. I have now a desire to know them and also (to know) their excellent greatness.

Vyāsa said:

18-20. O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of bathing at a holy place for that sinful man who devoutly sprinkles upon his head the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu? O brāhmaṇa, the sins like killing a brāhmaṇa, of him who would have the company of the good for a moment or half a moment, perish. In whichever family (even) one (member) is a devotee of Viṣṇu, the family (even) when full of sins (or sinners), attains salvation.

21-32. Those men (only) who are free from (doing) harm (to others), religious hypocrisy, lust and anger, and also those who are bereft of greed and infatuation, who are devoted to their

parents, should be known as the devotees of Viṣṇu, O brāhmaṇa. Those who are devoted to their parents, who are endowed with pity, who are engaged in the well-being of all creatures, who are free from jealousy, and who speak the truth should be known as the followers of Viṣṇu. Also those who are devoted to brāhmaṇas, who are impotent to the wives of others, who are engrossed in the vow of Ekādaśī should be known as the devotees of Viṣṇu. Wearing garlands of Tulasī(-leaves) those who sing the names of Viṣṇu, and who are sprinkled with the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu should be known as the followers of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, those also, on whose head or ears an excellent tulasī(-leaf) is usually seen, should be known as the devotees of Viṣṇu. Those who are free from the company of heretics, and free from hating brāhmaṇas, who would sprinkle (water) over the tulasī(-plant) should be known as Viṣṇu's devotees. Those men who worship Viṣṇu, also who worship him with tulasī(-leaves), who are engaged in offering their daughters (to worthy grooms), who honour their guests, who listen to the account of Viṣṇu, should be known as Viṣṇu's devotees, and also the man in whose house the śālagrāma stone would be well-established (is a devotee of Viṣṇu). Those men also, who cleanse the abode (i.e. the temple) of Viṣṇu, who perform rites in honour of the manes, who are full of pity towards the helpless, should be known as the followers of Viṣṇu. Those who look upon the wealth of others and of brāhmaṇas as poison, and those who eat the offering of eatables (after they are) presented to Viṣṇu should be known as the followers of Viṣṇu. And also those men who love Vedas and sacred texts, who protect the tulasī (-plants), who are engaged in practising the vow of Rādhāṣṭamī (or Janmāṣṭamī), and those who devoutly present a lamp before (the image of) Śrīkṛṣṇa, who do not censure others, should be known as the followers of Viṣṇu.

Sūta said:

33. Vyāsa who was asked by Jaimini, told him thus in the (proper) order. (Now) I am telling you what occasionally I heard from my preceptor, O brāhmaṇa.

34. Those best men who listen to the reading (of the account of Viṣṇu), are free from all sins, and go the highest position of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWO

The Importance of Besmearing the Floor of Viṣṇu's Temple

Sūta said :

1. O Śaunaka, listen. I shall tell you (about) the ancient way of life (from) the conversation between Vyāsa and Jaimini, which destroys the sins of the listeners.

Jaimini said:

2. O lord, O preceptor, tell me today by (doing) which acts does a sinful man go to the abode of the lord of the world.

Vyāsa said :

3. That man who besmears (the ground) in the temple of Viṣṇu, is freed from all sins, becomes tranquil and goes to the abode of Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu).

4-5. O Jaimini, listen, I shall tell you in brief about the religious merit of him who smears (i.e. sprinkles) with water (the ground) in the temple of the lord of the world. O best brāhmaṇa, he would live in the abode of Viṣṇu for as many thousands of kalpas as the dust particles are seen there.

6-14. Formerly there was a thief by name Daṇḍaka. He was a terror to the people. He snatched away the wealth of brāhmaṇas; he killed his friends; in the yuga called Dvāpara he told lies; he was cruel; he took delight in going to (i.e. having illicit connection with) others' wives. He ate the flesh of cows; he drank liquor; and kept company of heretics. He cut off (the means of) the livelihood of the brāhmaṇas; he usurped the deposits (kept with him); he killed those who sought his shelter; he ardently longed for the amorous movements of prostitutes. Once that foolish man went to the temple of Viṣṇu belonging to a

brāhmaṇa to steal the wealth of Viṣṇu. When he entered (the temple). he put his foot (dirty) with mud at low-levelled ground at the door of the temple. Just by that act the ground was free from slope. With joy he opened the panel of the door with two iron rods. He entered the temple of Viṣṇu adorned with an excellent canopy. It was having a jewelled golden lamp which had dispelled the great (i.e. thick) darkness. It was rich with the fragrance of many flowers; it was full of many vessels. It was filled with the fragrance of fragrant oil. The thief saw (the image of) Viṣṇu clad in a yellow garment sleeping (i.e. lying) with Rādhā on a very lovely bed.

15-22. Having saluted (i.e. when he saluted) the lord of Rādhā he became free from sins. 'Shall I take (away this wealth) or shall I not take away? (In) what (way) would it be (useful) to me? Since I am an all-time thief, I am unable to serve (the lord). The wealth would serve my purpose.' Thinking thus, he made up his mind to take it (away). Dropping on the ground the silken garment of the lord of Lakṣmī and keeping all the things in his hand, he, trembling, tied them (in the garment). O Jaimini, all those things of Viṣṇu, the master of illusory power (Māyā), fell down (on the ground) making a very fearful sound. Abandoning their sound sleep, and running, (saying) 'Oh! what is this?', many people came there. The thief, being frightened, left the things and (other) wealth (there only) and speedily fled somewhere. Being bitten by a black and most piosonous snake, he died and was freed from sins. By Yama's order his messengers with nooses and hammers in their hands and clad in skins and having fangs came (there) to take him (to Yama's abode). They tied him with leather straps and took him along a difficult path. Seeing him, Yama was angry, and asked his counsellor:

Yama said:

23. O wise Citragupta, tell me (about) the entire deed, sinful or virtuous, which he has done.

Citragupta said:

24-25. This fool has committed all the sins that the Creator has created on the earth. I have told the truth; but O lord of the

world, listen. He has also (done) some good deed. I think, O brother of Yamunā, that would destroy all his sins.

Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) said :

26-27. O minister, tell me what religious merit he has. Tell me the real truth. Hearing so, I shall put him where he would be fit.

Hearing the words of Yama, Citragupta, who was afraid, joined the palms of his hands, and spoke to his master, O brāhmaṇa:

Citragupta said :

28-29. This worst sinner among sinners had gone to steal the wealth of Viṣṇu. At the door of (the temple of) Viṣṇu, he threw the mud (clung) to his two feet. That floor was covered (with mud) and free from holes and pits. By the power of the religious merit his great sin has gone out (of him). He is fit for (staying in) Vaikuṇṭha. He is out (of the jurisdiction of) your punishment.

Vyāsa said :

30-31a. Hearing these words he (i.e. Yama) gave him a seat made of gold. He sat there; he was honoured by Yama. With his head (bent down) he saluted him, and politely said to him:

Yama said :

31b-33a. With the dust particles of your feet my abode is purified today. I am blessed, I am lucky, I am lucky; no doubt about it. O good one, now go to Viṣṇu's excellent abode which is full of many enjoyments and which keeps off birth and death.

Vyāsa said :

33b-37. Saying like this, that Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) placed him whose sins had gone (away), in a divine chariot which was made of gold and to which royal swans were yoked, and sent him to Viṣṇu's place which gives all pleasures. Thus he entered Vaikuṇṭha and lived there for a long time. O best brāhmaṇa, I do not know what will happen to them who do not devoutly besmear

the temple of Viṣṇu. The sin of him, earned during crores of existences, who would devoutly listen to this (account) or would attentively recite it, perishes. There is no doubt about it.

CHAPTER THREE

The Importance of Offering a Lamp to Viṣṇu

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, tell me the significance of (the month of) Kārtika. (Tell me) what the fruit of that vow is, and what the blemish of one who does not do it, is.

Sūta said:

2. On a former occasion, O best of sages, Jaimini asked (about) this to Vyāsa, Satyavatī's son. (Then) the sage (Vyāsa) commenced this narration:

Vyāsa said:

3-15. He who would give up sesamum-oil and copulation in the auspicious (month of) Kārtika, becomes free from sins committed during many (previous) existences and goes to Viṣṇu's abode. He, a fool, who does not give up (eating) fish and copulation in Kārtika, would certainly be (born as) a pig in every (subsequent) existence. A man who would worship Viṣṇu with the tulasī-leaves in Kārtika, obtains the fruit (of the performance) of a horse sacrifice for every leaf (that is offered to Viṣṇu). He who would worship Viṣṇu in Kārtika with the flowers of the muni-tree, obtains through Viṣṇu's grace salvation difficult to be obtained (even) by gods. The best man who eats the muni-vegetable in Kārtika, has all the sin committed during the year destroyed by (just) one vegetable (viz. muni). He who after offering to Viṣṇu eats the fruit of that (tree) in the month of Kārtika dear to Viṣṇu, (has all) his sin (committed) during crores of existences (destroyed). He who gives (an article of food), which is tasty and with ghee, to Viṣṇu, is freed from all sins and would

go to Viṣṇu's abode. A man, who offers even one lotus to Viṣṇu in Kārtika, in the end goes, free from all (his) sins, to Viṣṇu's position. He who would (everyday) bathe in the morning in (the month of) Kārtika dear to Viṣṇu, would obtain the fruit which (he would get) on bathing at all the sacred places. That brāhmaṇa, who would offer a lamp into water in Kārtika, is free from sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, and would go to the abode of Viṣṇu. O best brāhmaṇa, he who would offer a lamp even for a short time in Kārtika to please Viṣṇu, has Viṣṇu always pleased with him. Everyday the brāhmaṇa who would offer a lamp with ghee to Viṣṇu in his (own) house in Kārtika, obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice. I (shall) tell you the special significance (of the offering) of a lamp. O best of brāhmaṇas, being attentive, listen to it (as I tell it) with its tradition.

16-26a. Formerly, in Tretāyuga there was a pure brāhmaṇa Vaikuṇṭha by name. A sinner got (himself) liberated by virtue of his company. Once that best brāhmaṇa, having offered a lamp with ghee before Viṣṇu in Kārtika, went home. A rat came there to eat that ghee. When he started eating it from the lamp, the lamp burnt more brightly. The rat too, out of fear of the fire speedidy ran (away); and all the sin of the rat perished due to the grace of Viṣṇu. The rat was bitten by a serpent, and it died. Then, by Yama's order (his) messengers with nooses and hammers in their hands came (there) to take him (to Yama's abode), and tied him with leather-bands. When they made up their mind to take (him to Yama's abode), Viṣṇu's messengers having four hands (each) holding conches, discs and maces and mounted upon Garuḍa came (there). (There was) in the sky an aeroplane also. It was auspicious, and royal swans were yoked to it. It was made of pure gold and through Viṣṇu's grace it moved according to the wish (of the occupant). Having cut off the nooses (with which the rat was tied), the messengers spoke to Yama's servants: "O fools, this is Viṣṇu's devotee. In vain you had tied him. O servants of Yama, go (back) if you desire to live." Having heard (these words) they trembled and asked with politeness: "Please tell us, due to what power of his merit you are taking this great sinner to the city of Viṣṇu".

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

26b-34a. The rat revived the lamp in front of Viṣṇu. Due to that act, O messengers (of Yama), we are taking it to Viṣṇu's abode. He who even without desiring (to do so), revives the lamp of (i.e. offered to) Viṣṇu, abandons his sin earned in crores of (previous) existences, and goes to Viṣṇu's abode. Nobody except Viṣṇu is able to describe the merit of him who would devoutly offer on days of (i.e. auspicious to) Viṣṇu, a lamp (to Viṣṇu). What is the use of performing a thousand horse sacrifices for him who would offer in his house a lamp full of ghee to Viṣṇu? (As he) who performs the horse sacrifice on a day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu goes to heaven, so also, he who offers a lamp (to Viṣṇu) in Kārtika, would go to Viṣṇu's abode.

Vyāsa said:

Hearing this, (Yama's) messengers went as they had come; (and) Viṣṇu's messengers, having put it in a chariot went to Viṣṇu's abode. He passed a hundred ages of Manu in Viṣṇu's proximity only. Then, through Viṣṇu's grace he was (born) as a princess in the mortal world; and with her sons and grandsons she enjoyed pleasures for a long time. From here (i.e. the mortal world) she again went to the world of cows due to her service to Viṣṇu.

Sūta said:

34b-35. A man who devoutly listens to this excellent importance of the lamp, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Importance of Fasting on the Jayantī Day

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, tell (me about) the importance of Jayantī (birth day anniversary). When is it celebrated by the people? You are a boat in the ocean of the mundane existence.

Sūta said:

2. O brāhmaṇa, O best sage, listen; since I am asked, I shall tell you. This was formerly asked by Nārada from Brahmā in heaven.

Nārada said:

3. O grandsire, tell me the significance of Jayantī (i.e. birth day anniversary), hearing which I shall go to that highest position of Viṣṇu.

Brahmā said:

4-8. O brāhmaṇa, listen attentively. I shall tell you. He (i.e. a man) goes to Viṣṇu's world by fasting on a Jayantī (day). Jayantī, O sage, burns, through remembering, narrating (the account of Viṣṇu), the sin earned during the (previous) seven existences. The more so in the case of the sin of one who observes a fast (on that day). The Janmāṣṭamī, the auspicious ninth day of the bright half in Caitra, the fourteenth day of the dark half of Māgha, the fourteenth day of the bright half of Caitra, the Durgāṣṭamī in Āśvina, the twelfth day of the bright half of Śrāvaṇa—these six are said to be very meritorious Jayantīs, causing auspiciousness. The Kṛṣṇajanmāṣṭamī (mentioned) first is well-known and destroys sins. It is equal to a crore of sacrifices and to myriads of holy places.

9-18. By fasting on a Jayantī-day, one gets the fruit that is obtained by him who gives a thousand cows everyday. By fasting on a Jayantī-day he obtains the same fruit as by (the gift of) a thousand bhāras of gold at the time of (the auspiciousness) of the planet sun. By fasting on a Jayantī-day he obtains the same fruit as by giving thousands of black antelope-hides and hundreds of sesamum-cows. By fasting on a Jayantī-day a man gets that fruit which he obtains by offering thousands of crores daughters (in marriage). A man gets that fruit by fasting on a Jayantī-day which he obtains by giving this earth with the oceans. By fasting on a Jayantī-day he obtains the fruit which he obtains by constructing a well, a pond etc. in a temple. By fasting on a Jayantī-day a man obtains the same fruit as he, being devoted, does by doing (service) to his mother, father and preceptor. That merit which is obtained by those who, of a truthful vow, have made

themselves blessed by resorting to a sacred place for the removal of a calamity, is obtained by fasting on a Jayantī-day. That religious merit which a man obtains by bathing in Gaṅgā or Narmadā, or in the water of Sarasvatī, is obtained by him by fasting on a Jayantī-day. By fasting on a Jayantī-day a man obtains that fruit which the performers of a śrāddha in honour of their dead ancestors on a new moon day, obtain.

Nārada said:

19a. O grandsire, tell me, who formerly observed (a fast on) the Jayantī-day ?

Brahmā said:

19b-26a. (The fast on) the Jayantī-day was formerly observed by Kārtavīrya, Karṇa, the intelligent Kumāra (i.e. Kārtikeya), by Sagara, Dilīpa—the descendant of Kakutstha, by Gautama, Gārgya, the intelligent son of Jamadagni (i.e. Paraśurāma); so also it was formerly observed by Vālmīki, and the good son of Draupadī. (The fast on) the eighth of the bright half of Bhādrapada gives the desired objects. The eighth day is said to be of special importance when in union with the sun. For pleasing the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu), it should be observed every year. The sin earned in crores of existences vanishes in a short time. Having kept awake during the night, a man with his senses controlled, should devoutly worship (Viṣṇu) separately with sandal, flowers and offerings of food. O brāhmaṇa, the sin earned deliberately or without knowledge, of him who observes a fast on a Jayantī-day, perishes in half a watch, by the grace of the son of Devakī (i.e. Kṛṣṇa).

26b-37. There is no doubt that those mean men who eat when the day of Jayantī has arrived (i.e. on a Jayantī-day) suffer the sin produced in the three worlds. All the holy places like the ocean, all the places (which are) the abodes of the liberated, remain in all the parts of the house of him who observes the Jayantī-vow. All the holy places and deities live in the body of that man who devoutly observes (a fast on) the Jayantī-day, dear to Kṛṣṇa. O great sage, I have not seen in the Vedas or the Purāṇas a vow equal or superior to the vow of Kṛṣṇa-Rādhāṣṭamī. The man who does not devoutly observe

it, would be (born as) a cruel demon. O brāhmaṇa, that foolish man who eats (food) on a Jayantī-day as on the day (sacred) to Viṣṇu, obtains (i.e. goes to) a great hell. Due to his taking food on a Jayantī-day, one hundred and one preceding and succeeding (members of) his family would fall into a terrible hell. O best sage, what is the use of crores of vows, if a fast is observed when Jayantī would be (i. e. fall) on a Wednesday (when the Moon is) in unison with Rohiṇī ? (A fast on) a Jayantī-day observed according to the proper rule, destroys sin in the Kṛta-age, Tretā-age, Dvāpara-age and Kali-age. The sin earned from birth, of him who, keeping awake, causes to read aloud the Purāṇa of Viṣṇu, burns like a heap of cotton. The sin earned in a crore of existences, of the man who devoutly listens to the Purāṇa on a day (sacred) to Viṣṇu perishes at that moment only. On the day (sacred) to Viṣṇu a man should honour a suppliant, O sage. He liberates a crore (of the members) of his family and is honoured in Viṣṇu's world.

38-50. A man who does not observe a fast on a Jayantī-day and is averse to it, being bereft of all virtue, certainly goes to hell. A man should worship (Viṣṇu) with sandal, flowers, incense, and lamps full of ghee, and should give a present to a brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, that man who celebrates Jayantī in this manner, would, due to his devotion, liberate twentyone members of (his family). In his house there would be no misfortune, no widowhood, no quarrel, so also no opposition from his children. He never sees (i.e. experiences) loss of wealth. He who observes a fast on a Jayantī-day, obtains all the objects desired by him, and he goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. Those who fix their mind on observing the Jayantī-vow and are very much devoted to Viṣṇu, are blessed, are well-born, are wealthy and wise. Whatever sacred places, vows and restraints are there, they do not deserve (i.e. are not equal to) even the sixteenth part of the Jayantī-day. O child, he who with his wife observes (a fast on) the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī day in both the fortnights of Bhādrapada, reaches Viṣṇu's proximity. He who always observes the merit-giving vow, who observes a fast on a Jayantī-day, goes to Viṣṇu's Vaikuṇṭha. Jayantī, dear to Viṣṇu, quickly destroys the sin due to want of good conduct, (having) fallen (or been expelled) from the family, (being) deprived of fame, and

birth in a bad stock. He who observes a fast on a Jayantī, completely burns all sins comparable to Meru, and those like the murder of a brāhmaṇa. He who desires a son gets a son observing a fast on the Jayantī-day, who desires wealth obtains wealth, who desires salvation obtains salvation. Even Yama is afraid of those who greatly fix their mind on observing (a fast on) the Jayantī-day. They reach the highest position.

Sūta said:

51-53. Having (thus) told Nārada (about Jayantī), he (i.e. Brahmā) went as he had come. O sage, O brāhmaṇa, I have also told you what was asked by you. They too, who devoutly listen to the importance of Jayantī, go to the highest abode (after being) freed from all sins. O brāhmaṇa, similarly sinful men who see the reader of a Purāṇa and him who observes the Jayantī-vow, go to the highest place.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Deeds for Which One Becomes Sonless

Śaunaka said :

1. O you very intelligent one, tell me, due to which act (of a man) he becomes sonless (i.e. does not have a son), and due to (i.e. by doing) which (act) he would have a son.

Sūta said:

2. Formerly this was asked by the magnanimous Nārada from Brahmā. O best sage, listen to what he said (then).

Nārada said :

3-5. O grandsire, O very wise one, O you who have mastered all the truth, O you lotus-born, tell me by (i.e. doing) which deed a mortal would become sonless; due to what sin a woman would be barren. O you who are intent on the well-being of all

creatures, tell me, who am listening. Due to which deed a daugther is born, or an important son is born; due to what a child is still-born. A woman bringing forth a stillborn child is extremely unhappy. O Brahman, tell me due to which religious merit a son would be born.

Brahmā said:

6-7. I shall tell you in brief. Listen to it attentively. You are asking about an amazing account. Listen (to it). It is said that a brāhmaṇa who would snatch away or would cause to snatch away (i.e. who has snatched away or has caused to snatch away) the means of subsistence of a brāhmaṇa, would be sonless.

8-9. That man who in this existence would devoutly listen to a Purāṇa, or would make a present of a land with a crop on it, or who would give a golden cow of many qualities and giving profuse milk along with a present, so also one who would give a golden image (of a deity to a brāhmaṇa), would certainly get a son.

10. That woman who would in her former birth deceitfully kill (i.e. who has deceitfully killed) the child of someone else, would certainly be sonless.

11-12. That woman who, endowed with devotion, would make a present of a golden image (of a deity), and would devoutly drink the water (flowing) from the feet of a brāhmaṇa, would listen to a Purāṇa, or would offer a large present (to a brāhmaṇa), would have many children, and would have her children alive. There is no doubt about this.

13-15. A man or a woman who would not take out a child drowning in water, would certainly be sonless in this world. He who would give a bull, a pumpkin gourd with gold and cloth or would observe the auspicious vow for having a child, or would offer (the image of) a fair virgin, or would listen to a Purāṇa destroying all sins, would have a son.

16-17. That man who in his previous existence would disappoint a guest or would angrily punish him (i.e. who has disappointed or angrily punished a guest), would certainly be sonless. A man should devoutly honour a brāhmaṇa and a guest. He should give food, water, and (should construct) an auspicious temple.

18. That woman or that man who would cause (i.e. who has caused) abortion in her or his previous existence would certainly have a stillborn child.

19. That woman who along with her husband, would observe (a fast on) the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, would have good sons and would be a favourite wife of her husband in every existence.

20-21. A man who would make wealth with cows, or a śūdra who, being infatuated, would kidnap a brāhmaṇa-woman, would be born impotent due to (that) act. O brāhmaṇa, a daughter is born due to (that) act. O brāhmaṇa, a daughter is born by the power of the religious merit (to him) who, having committed this sin, later performs (acts of) religious merit.

22-25. O brāhmaṇa, in Tretāyuga there was a king by name Śrīdhara. He was sonless (but) wealthy. His wife was Hemaprabhāvatī. He asked Vyāsa who knew all sacred texts, who desired the well-being of all people, and who had come to him: "O brāhmaṇa, how (is it that) I am sonless?" (Seated) on a seat made of gold etc. and offered by the king, he, having heard the polite words of the king, answered thus: The king and the queen, being delighted washed his feet, and drank the water (with which) his feet (were washed), and which destroyed all sins.

Vyāsa said:

26-29. O king, hear (about) what you have asked me, (also about) the deed due to which you are sonless. This your queen also is sonless and you observe the vow of having one wife (only). In your former existence, you, the moon, were known by the name Varatanu. Your wife of a fair body was known by the name Śaṅkarī. Once you were going along a path. Though you saw the son of a low (-caste person) drowning in water, you contemptuously went ahead. The son died. By the power of your great religious merit, you became king and queen. (But) as a result of that deed, you would (i.e. did) not have a son.

The king said:

30. O lord, due to which (act of) religious merit, would a son be born (to us)? For, the life of persons having no son is fruitless.

Vyāsa said:

31-32. Give a gift of a pumpkin gourd with gold, cloth and a bull. Observe vow for obtaining a child, give (the image) of a fair virgin, and also listen to a Purāṇa. Then a son, destroying all sins, will be born.

Brahmā said :

33-34. Hearing this, the king gave an excellent gift as told by Vyāsa, and with his sins destroyed listened to a Purāṇa. Then within a year a son honoured by all was born (to them). The king became a sovereign emperor, handsome and the chief of his family.

Sūta said :

35-38. He who having no son, would devoutly listen to this, and make excellent presents, gets a son. I have told (this to you) in brief. O brāhmaṇa, that woman who would devoutly honour a brāhmaṇa according to the rules laid down in the sacred texts, would always have good sons. (So also the man) who would devoutly put on the book (of the Purāṇa) gold, silver, cloth, garland of flowers and sandal—which destroy all sins (would get good sons). A cruel son would be born to the fool who in his former existence has killed a brāhmaṇa or a child, and would be a brāhmaṇa after seven existences.

CHAPTER SIX

Acts Leading to Vaikuṇṭha

Śaunaka said :

1. O Sūta, tell me who am listening, due to which (acts of) religious merit Vaikuṇṭha is obtained (by a man), for you are a boat in the ocean of the worldly existence.

Sūta said :

2-7. O best sage doing auspicious (things) for all, (you have

asked) well. I shall tell you in brief (the rite) destroying all sins. Listen, O best brāhmaṇa, hear about the merit of him who would give a house made of clay to a brāhmaṇa devoted to Viṣṇu. That brāhmaṇa, free from all sins, would always live in a palatial building in Viṣṇu's heaven. He is honoured in Viṣṇu's heaven. He who would present a palatial building to a brāhmaṇa devotee of Viṣṇu, would, on reaching Viṣṇu's abode, certainly be a resident of heaven. O brāhmaṇa, he, with a crore of (members of) his family ultimately goes to Viṣṇu's city, and staying in a palatial golden building, he would enjoy pleasures as he pleases. (Even) the Creator, the cause of all, is unable to measure the religious merit that one would get by causing a brāhmaṇa to settle well (in his life), O sage.

8. Dust particles are (i.e. can be) counted; drops of rains are (i.e. can be) counted; (but) the fruit (obtained) by settling well a brāhmaṇa (in his life) cannot be guaged even by the Creator.

9-23. O great sage, listen to what Brahmā, the Creator, the origin of the mundane existence, told Nārada, when he was formerly asked by him. O brāhmaṇa, formerly in Dvāpara age, there was a woman by name Cañcalāpāṅgī; she was very beautiful, her hair was excellent, her eyes were like that of a female deer, her waist was charming, and her smile was lovely. Once she went to another country. Full of all sins, and causing people to fall into hell due to her contact (like that) of liquor, she went to a temple. For a moment she sat there and ate a tāmbūla. Through curiosity she threw the remaining powder on the lowly part of a wall. Then desiring (to secure) a paramour, and to secure wealth (from him) she went to the city. The prostitute rashly made an appointment with some paramour. Being fascinated she went to the appointed place (in) the forest at night. The merchant (her paramour) did not come to the rendezvous. She expected (him) and thought to herself: 'How (is it) that my lover has not come? Has he been eaten up by serpents or tigers? How has he, beside himself due to passion, gone (elsewhere) leaving the place of appointment? Is he hankering after some other unknown woman?' O brāhmaṇa, thinking (like) this in her mind she through the fear of the fort-guard did not arrive into the city as the public road was covered with darkness. O brāhmaṇa, in the meanwhile a hungry tiger that took up any form that he liked, that was sent

by the god of death, came there and forcibly ate her up. Then the messengers of Yamunā's brother (i e. Yama), whose forms were fearful, whose bodies resembled mountain-peaks, came there to take her (to Yama's abode) due to her sinful deed. Their feet were crooked, their faces were crooked, their noses were projecting, and they had many jaws. O brāhmaṇa, taking leather straps and hammers the very frantic messengers tied up that licentious harlot with leather straps. The messengers of the magnanimous Viṣṇu who holds a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus, that were going along the path saw her. They resembled black clouds, their lotus-like faces were throbbing, they formed a group, their noses were charming, and they were adorned with divine ear-rings.

The messengers of Viṣṇu said :

24-27. Who are you of deformed forms, who appear like demons? Where are you going carrying this excellent (lady), the most beloved of Viṣṇu?

Hearing these words of them, they (i.e. Yama's messengers) went (away) quickly. Then those very powerful messengers of Viṣṇu, who were full of anger, struck the messengers of Yama, the lord of the world, with multitudes of weapons like the disc, having the brilliance of that of a crore of suns. All the warriors of Yama ran away, crying; and O brāhmaṇa, they who were frightened, narrated the entire account to Yama. Yama too, having heard that account, said to Citragupta:

Dharma (i.e. Yama) said :

28. O minister, due to which (act of) religious merit has the prostitute gone to (i.e. obtained) salvation? Tell all this according to its merit, to me who am asking (you).

Citragupta said :

29-32. From her birth she had earned very many sins; but, O lord of the world, hear if she might have some merit (to her credit). O lord of Dharma, once (this) prostitute, adorned with all ornaments, seeking wealth and looking for a paramour, went to a certain city. There (i.e. in that city) having remained in the temple, and having eaten a tāmbūla, she threw, out of curiosity, the remaining powder on a wall, By the power of that

merit the harlot with her sins gone (away), and free from your punishment, goes to Vaikuṇṭha.

Sūta said:

33-37. Hearing these words the messengers and Yama also set their mind on other work, O brāhmaṇa. That harlot also, mounted in a divine chariot yoked with royal swans and surrounded by Viṣṇu's servants, went to Viṣṇu's world. O brāhmaṇa, she by the order of Viṣṇu stayed along with a crore (members of) her family in a palatial building and enjoyed many pleasures. O best brāhmaṇa, I do not know (i.e. cannot judge) the merit of him who devoutly and carefully puts powder into Viṣṇu's temple (to beautify it). He who would devoutly recite (this) chapter or listen to it with respect, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Greatness of Rādhāṣṭamī

Śaunaka said:

1. O very wise one, O you very intelligent one, tell me due to which act a man goes to the world of cows from the ocean of the mundane existence which is difficult to cross and, O Sūta, about Rādhāṣṭamī and its excellent importance.

Sūta said:

2. O brāhmaṇa, O great sage, formerly Nārada had asked this from Brahmā. Listen, in brief, to what he had asked him.

Nārada said:

3-5. O grandsire, O very wise one, O best among those who know all the sacred texts, O dear one, tell me (about) Rādhājanmāṣṭamī. O lord, what is its religious fruit? Who observed it in olden days? O brahman, what would be the sin of those men who do not observe it? In what way is the vow to be observed?

When is it to be observed? Tell me (all) that from the beginning, from whom Rādhā was born.

Brahmā said:

6-12. O child, listen very attentively to (the description of the vow of) Rādhājanmāṣṭamī. I shall tell you in brief the entire (account). O Nārada, except Viṣṇu it is not possible (for anyone) to tell about its meritorious fruit. That sin like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, of them who have earned it through a crore of existences, perishes in a moment, (when) they devoutly observe it (i.e. the vow). The religious merit of Rādhājanmāṣṭamī is hundred times more than the fruit which a man obtains by observing (a fast on) a thousand Ekādaśī (days). The merit due to Rādhāṣṭamī observed (but) once, is hundred times more that the fruit obtained by giving gold equal to the Meru (mountain). People obtain that fruit from the Rādhāṣṭamī, which (merit) they obtain by giving a thousand virgins (in marriage). A man gets that fruit of the Aṣṭamī of the beloved of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Rādhāṣṭamī), which he would get by bathing in holy places like Gaṅgā. (Even) a sinner who observes this vow casually or devoutly, would along with a crore members of his family go to Viṣṇu's heaven.

13-20. O child, formerly in Kṛtayuga an excellent, very beautiful woman, having a beautiful (i.e. slender) waist, having eyes like those of a female deer, of a beautiful form, having lovely hair, lovely ears, was known by the name Līlāvatī. She had committed very grave sins. Once, she, hankering after wealth, went to another city moving out from her own city. There, in a beautiful temple, she saw many wise people intent on observing the Rādhāṣṭamī vow. They were worshipping devoutly the excellent image of Rādhā with sandal, flowers, incense, lamps, (pieces of) cloth and various kinds of fruits. Some sang, danced, recited the excellent hymn of praise. Some (others) joyfully played upon the lute and beat the drum. Seeing them like that, she, full of curiosity, went near them, and politely asked them: "O you religious-minded ones, what are you, full of joy, doing? O virtuous ones, tell me who am full of politeness (what you are doing)."

21-24. Those devotees, intent upon the observance of the

vow, and interested in obliging and doing good to others, started speaking.

Those who observed the Rādhā (-aṣṭamī) vow said: "Today that eighth day on which—i.e. on the eighth day of the bright fortnight—Rādhā was born, has arrived. We are observing it carefully. This (vow of) the Aṣṭamī which is observed (like this) quickly destroys men's sins like the sin due to the murder of a cow, or arising from stealing, or killing a brāhmaṇa, or which is due to carrying off the wife of another person, or due to (a man's) violating his teacher's bed (i.e. wife)."

25-42. Hearing their words, and repeatedly thinking (to herself), 'I shall observe (this vow) which destroys all sins' she observed that excellent vow there only along with those who were observing it. That pure woman died due to being hurt (i.e. bitten) by a serpent. Then (Yama's) messengers with nooses and hammers in their hands came there by Yama's order, and tied her in a very painful way. When they decided to take her to Yama's abode, messengers of Viṣṇu holding conches and maces came (there). (They had brought with them) an auspicious aeroplane made of gold, to which royal swans were yoked. Having quickly cut off (the nooses) with edges of their discs, they put that woman whose sin had gone (away), into the chariot. They took her to the charming city of Viṣṇu, called Goloka, where she stayed with Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā due to the propitiousness of the vow. O dear one, for him who, a fool, does not observe the vow of Rādhāṣṭamī, there is no acquittance from hell even for hundreds of crores of kalpas. Those women also who do not observe this vow which causes auspiciousness, which delights Rādhā and Viṣṇu, which destroys all sins, go to Yama's city in the end and fall into a hell for a long time. If per chance they get a birth on the earth, they certainly (become) widows. O child, once (this) earth was struck by the groups of the wicked. She, being extremely helpless, became a cow, and approached me. Weeping again and again, she told me (about) her grief. Hearing her words, I went to the proximity of Viṣṇu. I quickly narrated to Kṛṣṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) the intensity of her grief. He said (to me): "O brahman, with the gods go to the earth. Later I (shall) also go there with my attendants." Hearing that I, along with the gods, came to the earth. Then Kṛṣṇa, calling Rādhā (who was to him) greater than

his own life, said (these) words (to her); "O goddess, I am going to the earth to destroy the burden of the earth. You (also) go to the earth." Having heard those (words), Rādhā also then went to the earth. That Rādhikā sprang up by day on the sacrificial ground of Vṛṣabhānu on the day called Aṣṭamī in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada. When purified for the sacrifice, she, having a divine form, was seen (there). The king, delighted in mind, took her to his house and handed her over to his queen. She, too, nourished her.

43. Thus, O child, the words that I have told you are to be kept secret, to be kept secret, to be kept secret carefully.

Sūta said:

44. He who would devoutly listen to this (account of the vow) giving the fruit of the four goals (of human life), becomes free from all sins and ultimately goes to Viṣṇu's house.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Prelude to the Churning of Ocean

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, O preceptor, why was the ocean churned by the gods in ancient days? Curiosity is produced in my mind to hear it.

Sūta said:

2. O brāhmaṇa, I shall tell you in brief the reason for the churning of the ocean. Listen also to the account of the dialogue between Durvāsas and Indra.

3. Once, the brāhmaṇic sage Durvāsas who had practised great (i.e. severe) penance, who was very lustrous, who was born of a portion of the Lord, went to heaven to see Indra.

4-6a. At that time he saw Śacī's lord (i.e. Indra) mounted on the elephant (called Airāvata). Seeing a garland of Pārijāta (flowers) the great sage gave it to him (i.e. to Indra). O brāh-

maṇa, Indra, the lord of gods, taking that garland, and putting it on the head of the elephant went with his army to Nandana (garden). The elephant seizing that garland, cut it off and hurled it on the ground.

6b-7. The great sage, getting very angry, thus spoke to him: "Since, you being endowed with the glory of the three worlds, are thinking lightly (of me), there is no doubt that your glory of the three worlds would perish".

8-12. Then Indra quickly went to his city and then slept. The mother of the worlds saw (this) and disappeared. When she disappeared, the three worlds also disappeared. All (creatures) being hungry and thirsty constantly cried. The clouds did not shower (rain), and reservoirs of water went dry. All the trees were dried up and were bereft of fruits and flowers. All (gods) oppressed by hunger and thirst approached Brahmā. They told the grandsire about their distress and grief. Hearing the words of gods, the Creator, along with hosts of gods and sages like Bhṛgu, went to the milky ocean.

13-16. The Creator, muttering the eight-lettered hymn and meditating (on Viṣṇu), worshipped Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, on the northern shore of the milky ocean. Then Viṣṇu was pleased with all the gods, and the kind lord having mounted upon Garuḍa came there. (Gods) on seeing Viṣṇu who had worn a yellow garment, who had four arms, who had held a conch, a disc and a mace, who was the lord of the worlds, whose eyes resembled lotuses, who was a boat of (i.e. to cross) the ocean of mundane existence, who was adorned with a garland of wood-flowers, who had a curl of hair and the Kaustubha gem on his chest, had their eyes full of tears of joy, and praised with cries of victory and continuously saluted him.

The lord said:

17. O gods, choose a boon. Why have you come to me? I am the giver of boons. So speak (out). I (shall) give you (what you want). (This will not be) otherwise.

Gods said:

18-19a. O kind one, due to the brāhmaṇa's curse, the three worlds are bereft of wealth; O lord, with gods, demons and men

they are oppressed by hunger and thirst. Protect all these worlds. We have sought your refuge.

The lord said:

19b-23. O gods, Indirā (i.e. Lakṣmī), due to whose mere glance the world is endowed with glory, has vanished due to the curse of the brāhmaṇa (viz. Durvāsas). Then, O gods, all of you, along with the demons, having uprooted the golden mountain Mandara and making it, with the king of serpents going round it, the churning-rod, churn the milky ocean. O gods, from it Lakṣmī, the mother of the world will spring up. O glorious ones, there is no doubt that because of her you will be delighted. I myself, in the form of a tortoise, shall fully hold the (Mandara) mountain (on my back).

Saying so, that lord Viṣṇu disappeared. O brāhmaṇa, all the gods and demons went for churning the ocean.

CHAPTER NINE

The Churning Starts

Sūta said:

1. Then the hosts of gods with gandharvas and demons uprooted the Mandara mountain and put it into the ocean.

2-7a. Then the glorious, kind, ancient lord of the world supported on his back the bottom of the mountain. (Then the gods) putting Ananta (the lord of serpents) round it churned the milky ocean. When it was being churned on the Ekādaśī day, all of them ran away seeing the Kālakūṭa poison that had come up. Seeing them running away Śaṅkara said these (words): "O hosts of gods, hand over the poison to me. I shall quickly inactivate the great (i.e. severe) poison, viz. Kālakūṭa". Saying so, that lord of Pārvatī, meditating upon Viṣṇu in his heart and uttering the great hymn, took that fearful poison. By the power of the great hymn, that great (deadly) poison was digested.

7b-22. He who, being controlled, would devoutly mutter the three names, viz. Acyuta, Ananta, and Govinda, of Viṣṇu with Praṇava (i.e. Om) at the beginning and Om at the end, has no fear of taking poison, or from fire and also from death. Then gods with their minds delighted, churned the milky ocean. Then Alakṣmī (i.e. Evil Fortune), of a dark face and red eyes, having rough and tawny hair, and having an old body, sprang up. She, the eldest one, said to the gods: "What should I do?" The gods spoke to that goddess, the repository of misery: "O goddess, we are giving you a place in the homes of those men where quarrel takes place. O eldest one, accompanied by evil stay (there). Always remain, causing misery, in the houses of those men who speak cruel and false words and who the mean men, eat at dusk. O eldest one, there is no doubt that your stay will be there where there are skulls, hair, ashes, bones, and chaff fire. Always remain, causing grief and poverty in the houses of those mean men who eat without washing their feet. Stay, always giving grief, and with dissension, in the houses of those who clean their teeth with sand, salt or charcoal. O you eldest one, causing filth, your stay will be in the houses of those mean men who eat mushrooms and a left-over coconut. There is no doubt that you will stay in the houses of those men of sinful thoughts, who eat sesamum-flour, bottle-gourd, garlic, shoots of young plants, a species of kadamba (called kalambaka) and onions. O you inauspicious one, always stay there (i.e. in that house) which is bereft of sacrifices (offered to) preceptors and gods, and bereft of gifts to guests, and where the sound of (the recital of) the Vedas is absent. O you inauspicious one, always stay there, where there takes place quarrel between a husband and his wife, where no worship of the dead ancestors or gods takes place, and where there is (indulgence in) gambling. Causing sins and poverty, always stay in that place where there dwell men who are adulterers, who snatch away the wealth of others, and where brāhmaṇas, good men and old men are not honoured." Having thus directed that eldest of all, who liked (to set up) quarrels, the gods again together churned the ocean.

CHAPTER TEN

The Birth of Lakṣmī

Sūta said:

1-4. Then Airāvata sprang up (from the ocean), so also the horse Uccaiḥśravas. Then (sprang up) Dhanvantari, and the fragrant Pārijāta. So also there was the rise of the celestial nymphs. Then on the twelfth day in the morning, when the sun had risen, the great Lakṣmī, graced with all (auspicious) characteristics, sprang up. All the religious deities saw that great mother of all creatures having her abode in the heart of Viṣṇu, and were delighted. Then, the cool-rayed one (i.e. the Moon), the brother of Lakṣmī, sprang up with nectar. (So also) Tulasī, Viṣṇu's wife, purifying the world, came up.

5-6. Then they, with their desires fulfilled, put the mountain as it was before, and having together praised the mother, muttered the excellent Śrī-sūkta (i.e. hymn in honour of Lakṣmī). Then that goddess, who was pleased, said to all gods: "Well-being to you, O best gods, ask for a boon. I shall grant it."

The gods said:

7-8. O goddess Kamalā, O mother of all, O you who are dear to Viṣṇu, be pleased. Without you the world is a void. Protect our lives.

Thus addressed, that great Lakṣmī, dear to Viṣṇu, said: "Now I shall protect the lives of all creatures."

9-11. Then Viṣṇu, the kind lord of the world, holding a conch, a disc and a mace, suddenly appeared (there). Then the gods saluted the lord of the worlds and praised him. With the palms of their hands joined they spoke with a faltering voice: "O Viṣṇu, accept this Lakṣmī, the mother, your dear queen, who does not go away, for the good of the mundane existence." As long as he did not take the pledge (of marrying her) Lakṣmī said to Viṣṇu:

Lakṣmī said:

12. O Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), O lord, how do you

desire to marry me, the younger (sister), without marrying the elder sister, Alakṣmī? Does the younger sister get married when the elder remains unmarried?

Sūta said:

13-18. Having heard this, Viṣṇu, along with the gods, and according to the Vedic text, gave Alakṣmī to Uddālaka. Then the glorious Viṣṇu accepted Lakṣmī. Then all the hosts of gods again and again saluted him. Then they, superior in power, struck all the demons. All of them, crying, went into the ten directions. By the order of Viṣṇu the gods arranged a line in due order to eat (i.e. to drink) the nectar, and said to one another: "You give it, you give it, you give it." Thus they spoke. They said: "I can't, I can't, I can't." Then Viṣṇu stood up, and took up a feminine form and distributed the nectar with a golden vessel.

19-22. When Rāhu ate up (i.e. drank) the nectar, the Moon and the Sun said: "This is a demon, who has come here deceitfully." Then the lord of the world was angry, and struck him with the golden pot. His (i.e. Rāhu's) head dropped on the ground, and came to be known as Ketu. Then, Rāhu and Ketu, afflicted with fear quickly went (away) from there. Now (even) when that day arrives he fights with the Moon and the Sun. The son of Siṁhikā (i.e. Rāhu) would live (in them). That would be a moment difficult to secure. (At that time) all water is like (that of) Gaṅgā, and all brāhmaṇas are like Vyāsa.

23-25. He, who, (at that time) bathes at the Vyāsatīrtha, would obtain the fruit of the bath at Gaṅgā. The gifts given (at that time) would have an inexhaustible merit; and the sin earned (i.e. committed) during crores of existences would completely perish; what then is the use of crores of sacrifices? One who longs for knowledge, gets it. One who desires a son, gets one. One who desires salvation, obtains it. A spell would certainly become effective. Thus, O brāhmaṇa, I have told you (the account of) the churning of the ocean.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Importance of Observing a Vow in Honour of Lakṣmī

Śaunaka said:

1-3. Now I desire to hear, O you who were actually instructed by Veda Vyāsa, of the nature of Viṣṇu. O you who have no pride, O you who favour the world, tell me properly as to how (i.e. by doing what) a sinful and very miserable woman would be fortunate. By (doing) what would she be dear to her husband, would she be beautiful, and nectar to (his) eyes? O you, rich in penance, tell me by which (means) wealth is produced.

Sūta said:

4. O brāhmaṇa, if (you think) this is a meritorious account, difficult to be had, (then) listen. I shall tell it to you briefly and properly.

5-13. In the yuga called Dvāpara, there was a king by name Bhadraśravas. He was a resident of the Saurāṣṭra country and had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas. He had a wife by name Suratacandrikā. From her the king got seven attractive sons. Then a beautiful and truthful daughter, Śyāmābālā by name was born. She delighted her father. Once Śyāmābālā went joyfully with her friends to the ground under a nīpa tree, very difficult to be met with, in the golden sands to play with attractive gems (to be) concealed (and then to be discovered). In the meanwhile, O brāhmaṇa, Lakṣmī, rescuing people from the worldly existence and giving (i.e. teaching) them the right course and having taken the form of an old brāhmaṇa lady, herself came (there); and O brāhmaṇa, thinking in her mind (i.e. to herself), 'Barring the house of the king, the ruler of all the people, to the house of which mean people should I go now ?' she went to the king's abode which had golden walls and which was adorned with banners. Then having crossed the main gate, she said to the door-keeper: "O you of auspicious characteristics who are appointed at the door, leave it (and report to the queen). I am quickly going and seeing queen Suratacandrikā".

14. Hearing those words of her, uttered like the note of a

cuckoo, (the doorkeeper) holding a golden staff in her hand, was extremely delighted.

The doorkeeper said:

15. O old lady, what is your name? Who is your husband? How have you come (here)? What is your business in seeing (i.e. with) the queen? For what reason (do you want to see her)? What (is your intention), O brāhmaṇa lady? I have curiosity to hear it.

The old lady said:

16-18a. Listen, O you (queen's) employee, O you who hold a jewelled staff (i.e. you who are the doorkeeper) of the great king's wife, since you have curiosity for (i.e. to know) the reason for my arrival, I am (that) well-known (goddess) named Kamalā, and the lord of the worlds is known as the lord of my life. (My) city is Dvāravatī by name. O employee, the lord of my life lives in that (city). O you having a jewelled staff in your hand, listen with curiosity. I have come from there. Now, to you, I shall tell the reason for my arrival.

18b-26. Formerly (i.e. in a former existence), your queen, born in a vaiśya family, was unhappy. One day, O employee, that unhappy lady quarrelled with her husband, and then tormented by her husband, she, weeping repeatedly, immediately went out of the house. Hearing her weeping, I approached her. I asked her all (her) account, and was properly told. Then I taught her the excellent vow. On my having taught the vow to her, she gladly practised the vow. O you doorkeeper, due to its propitiousness she became happy. Once she, born in a vaiśya family, died with her husband. Then lord Dharmarāja, who brings about the destruction of all, sent his fearful servants to bring the two (to his abode). The fierce massengers came (there) by Yama's order. They, with iron hammers in their hands exerted to go to Yama's abode.

27-31. In the meanwhile, those messengers of Lakṣmī, who were Viṣṇu's devotees, and who had held conches, discs and maces, came (there) to take them (to her abode). Seeing them like that, Yama's messengers fled (away). (Then) the magnanimous, self-radiant messengers of Lakṣmī cut off the nooses and

having put them in a chariot to which royal swans were yoked, they all suddenly went along the aerial path to Lakṣmī's city. For so many thousands of kalpas the two lived in Lakṣmī's city, as many times the excellent vow was practised by the vaiśya lady. To enjoy the remaining religious merit, the two are now born in a royal family. O you doorkeeper, the two, proud of the royal glory, have forgotten the vow. Therefore, to advise her and you also about the vow I have come (here).

The doorkeeper said:

32-33a. O old lady, in what manner is the vow practised? Practised in which month is the vow the best? Which is the deity that is worshipped? O mother, tell properly this to me who am asking you.

Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī) said:

33b-43a. O employee (i.e. O doorkeeper), when the month of Kārtika has passed and the month of Mārgaśīrṣa has arrived, in that month, on a day called Thursday, in the morning, a woman surrounded by those who practise the vow, should worship Lakṣmī along with Nārāyaṇa. O you employee, she should propitiate Lakṣmī with sweets (mixed) with sweetened milk, and (articles of) food mixed with candied sugar, and then should pray like this: "O Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī), you who are worshipped by the worlds and you who are dear to Viṣṇu; as you are unshakingly (devoted) to Kṛṣṇa (i.e.Viṣṇu), in the same way remain (firmly) in me. O goddess Lakṣmī, you who rule (everything), O sinless one, give me shelter." Assuring Lakṣmī with many presents, she should please her. She should worship the goddess with great festivity by reciting sacred texts. O employee, then giving the remains of the articles of food to the deity, to the best brāhmaṇa, she should (distribute it among) herself, her husband, sons and other servants. O beautiful lady, listen to the speciality of the second Thursday: She should propitiate Lakṣmī with auspicious fried articles of wheat baked in earthen pots and variegated powders. She should devoutly (worship) Lakṣmī. On the third (Thursday) she should offer present of boiled rice mixed with candied sugar. On the fourth (Thursday) she should carefully and joyfully worship goddess

Lakṣmī with excellent śyāmāka and śāli (rice), O you having a jewelled staff in your hand. Then to please goddess Lakṣmī, she should please brāhmaṇas with (i.e. by giving them) money, cloth, ornaments, various articles of food and fruits.

The doorkeeper said:

43b-47a. O old lady, stay here only; informing the queen (of your arrival) I shall take you (to her). O best one, do not be angry.

Saying so, that beautiful lady went to the queen. O brāhmaṇa, that doorkeeper, having put her joined palms on her head told all that Lakṣmī had said from the beginning to the end to queen Suratacandrikā. Having heard the words of the doorkeeper queen Suratacandrikā went near the brāhmaṇa lady, and the beautiful lady proudly spoke to her.

The queen said:

47b-48a. O old brāhmaṇa lady, to advise what have you come here? Tell it to me quickly, as you please and giving up fear.

The brāhmaṇa lady said:

48b-50a. Seeing your immorality I desire to go quickly. O wicked one, what shall I tell you, since today, on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Lakṣmī, O you cāṇḍālā, you are not observing that vow very difficult to have? I have seen that. Now, O proud one, who will (live) in your house?

50b-52. Hearing these words of the brāhmaṇa lady, she (i.e. the queen) with her eyes red with anger struck the old brāhmaṇa lady. Then that old Kamalā (i.e. Lakṣmī) ran away crying. Then that girl Śyāmā, having penance as her wealth, who was playing, came near that brāhmaṇa lady on hearing her weeping.

Śyāmābālā said:

53-61. O old lady, tell me who caused you pain like this.

O best of brāhmaṇas, having heard her words, Kamalā, with

her voice faltering due to grief, told her the entire account. Śyāmābālā, having heard from her that vow extremely difficult to have, practised it, as told in the sacred texts, with faith and devotion. When the first three days (i.e. Thursdays) were over, and the fourth (Thursday) arrived, her marriage rite was accomplished by the grace of Lakṣmī. The son named Mālādhara, of king Śrīsiddheśvara, having royal lustre, took her and went home. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the wonder (that took place) when she had gone. O brāhmaṇa, it was not known who had taken away the very many rich articles that were there in the house of the queen. She sat without wealth, without ideas and without food and clothes; and to ask (her daughter) for something, she sent her husband with someone to her daughter's house. O brāhmaṇa, after some time he went with difficulty to the village of that Mālādhara, and reached the bank of a lake. Her maids had come there to take water from that (lake). Seeing him who was most unhappy, they, sympathising with him, said (to him).

The maids said:

62. Tell us all that—who you who have lost flesh and blood, whose body and hair are rough, are; wherefrom you have come.

The poor man said:

63-67. I am Śyāmābālā's father. I have come from Saurāṣṭra city. O maids, tell this to Śyāmābālā.

Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) him, they who were full of curiosity, laughed after looking at one another's face, and went to their city; and O brāhmaṇa, they told the entire account to Śyāmābālā. Hearing their words, she sent her servants. The beautiful lady gave her father flowers, oil, divine garments, sandal, betel-leaf and a horse. All the servants also went (to him) and having made him well-dressed, took him to Śyāmābālā's house, resembling a palace.

68-71. Then Śyāmābālā also carefully fed her father who was most unhappy, with food of śāli (i.e. boiled rice) with ghee. When four days had passed, she gave him money concealed in a vessel, and sent him (back), O you whose wealth is your pen-

ance. Then after entering his house, he found that the money that was there in the vessel (had turned into) a heap of charcoals, and being extremely unhappy he wept. He who had come (back) to his (own) house, went out of it to go to his daughter's house. She also went to the bank of that lake.

72-80. The chaste lady (i.e. Śyāmābālā) honoured her who was dearer to her than her own life, in the same way through affection for her mother. At this time Śyāmābālā thought of making her mother observe (the vow of) the excellent day of Lakṣmī. Her mother, having incurred the wrath of Lakṣmī, experienced poverty, and secretly ate what was left over by young ones of animals. Three days sacred to Lakṣmī passed, and on the fourth one she (i.e. Śyāmābālā) firmly made her observe (that vow). That queen Suratacandrikā came (back) to her city. She saw her house divine like that (i.e. as before) by the grace of Lakṣmī. O best of brāhmaṇas, Śyāmābālā on some occasion again went to the house of her mother with a desire to see her glory. Seeing Śyāmābālā from a distance, she became angry; and saying, "I shall not see her face", she remained hidden. Going into the interior of the house, and taking salt (from there), she (i.e. Śyāmābālā) quietly came to her house resorted to by Lakṣmī. The king, her lord, asked the chaste lady whose husband was her god: "O dear one, tell me what you have brought."

The wife said:

81-84. I have brought the essence of the kingdom; I shall show it to you at (the time of) the meal.

Saying so she cooked food without salt and gave food etc. to king Mālādhara. Then king Mālādhara eating the seasoned article without salt, became sad. Then she gave him (the salt) the essence of the kingdom. O brāhmaṇa, then the king's mind was pleased and he took his meal. And (repeatedly) saying, '(You are) blessed, (you are) blessed,' he praised the woman. One who does not observe this vow with great respect would become poor and luckless in existence after existence.

85-86. He who would listen to this with devotion, or would recite it attentively, would be freed from all sins, and would

obtain (i.e. go to) Lakṣmī's world. There is no doubt that for her who observes this vow without listening to its story, the fruit of the vow is lost.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Merit Earned by Protecting a Brāhmaṇa

Śaunaka said :

1. O Sūta, kindly tell (me) due to which other religious merit a man with his sins gone (away) goes to the place of Viṣṇu.

Sūta said :

2-5. That man, O best brāhmaṇa, who protects a brāhmaṇa with his (own) wealth or his (own) life, goes to Viṣṇu's world. Formerly, in the yuga called Dvāpara, there was a king (named) Dīnānātha who was sonless (but who was) a devotee of Viṣṇu and a sacrificer. Once that king politely asked Gālava: "O best sage, O ocean of compassion, tell me due to which religious merit a son is born. I shall practise it by your order. The life of those men who do not have a son is useless."

Gālava said:

6-7. O king, I shall tell you in brief the cause of a son's birth about which you have asked me. Listen attentively. O best king, perform the sacrifice called *Naramedha*. Then you will have progeny endowed with all (good) characteristics.

The king said:

8. O preceptor, O brāhmaṇa, tell me by bringing what kind of man I shall perform the great human sacrifice, the best among sacrifices

Gālava said:

9-22. If a man has a handsome body, a charming face and

is proficient in all sacred texts, then he is fit for sacrifice. He who is crippled, has a black complexion, is a fool, would not be fit (for sacrifice).

O brāhmaṇa, when Gālava spoke like this, that king, the lord of men, sent his messengers, telling them the words of Gālava; and giving much money he selected brāhmaṇas like Gālava who had mastered all Vedic texts. Then by the order of the king the messengers gladly went carefully from country to country, village to village and even to cities, O best brāhmaṇa. Not finding (such a man) anywhere they then went to a country (and the city) called Daśapura which, O brāhmaṇa, was crowded with virtuous brāhmaṇas; where seeing the women having lovely hair and eyes like those of the young ones of deer, men were infatuated, since the women were moon-faced. In that charming city was (i.e. lived) a brāhmaṇa named Kṛṣṇadvija with his three sons and his amiable wife. He was a devotee of Viṣṇu, always spoke agreeably and was engaged in worshipping Viṣṇu. He maintained the (sacred) fire, was devoted to his parents and was a benefactor of the devotees of Viṣṇu. Then the messengers of the king requested the best brāhmaṇa: "O best brāhmaṇa, say, 'give a son, give a son'. O best brāhmaṇa, the king does not have a son who would remove his affliction. For that (son) be initiated into the sacrifice called *Naramedha*. We shall take your son to offer him as a victim in that great sacrifice. O brāhmaṇa, carefully take a lakh of (coins of) gold (in exchange for your son). If, due to your fondness for your son, you would not give your son ungrudgingly, then we shall take him forcibly (because) we carry out the order of the king." Hearing the words of the messengers the brāhmaṇa and his wife were afflicted with grief and with their minds full of fear, they were, as it were dead. "What is the use of wealth, gold, life or house ?" The brāhmaṇa spoke these words to the royal officers.

The brāhmaṇa said:

23-27. O messengers, if you have certainly come to take (away) my son who removes the darkness of grief (in my life), then (please) listen to my words. Who living on the earth desires

to disobey the king's order ? But, leaving my son you (please) take me, an old brāhmaṇa (to the king).

Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, the messengers, full of anger, forcibly left (coins of) gold in his house. When they angrily made up their mind to take away the son, the brāhmaṇa, weeping, and with the palms of his hands joined said: "O men, these words viz. 'leaving the eldest among my sons, take the other excellent one' do not come to my mouth (i.e. my tongue)."

28-30. Hearing the words of the brāhmaṇa, the messengers said to the brāhmaṇa's wife who was weeping: "O best one, give us the younger son." Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) them, the brāhmaṇa woman, being extremely grieved, fell on the ground as a plantain-tree falls on the ground due to (strong) wind. Taking up a hammer, she violently struck it on her head: "O messengers, I shall never give you my youngest son."

31-36. O brāhmaṇa, at this time the middle son of the brāhmaṇa, full of modesty and weeping, said to his parents: "Who would be the protector if the mother gives poison (to her son), or the father sells his son, or the king snatches away everything." Saying so, the son, saluting his parents with his head (bowed down), went with the speedy messengers of the king who was initiated. Then the brāhmaṇa and his wife, with their minds afflicted by the separation from their son, wept again and again and became blind. Then they (i.e. the messengers) on their way went to the hermitage of sage Viśvāmitra, which was full of (his) disciples and resorted to by young deer. The sage, seeing the royal officers, respectfully asked them: "O (men), who are you? Where had you gone? What is your profession?"

The king's messengers said:

37-40. O brāhmaṇa, listen attentively. A son is not born to the king. For (i.e. to obtain) that the king is initiated into the sacrifice called *Naramedha*. We are taking this brāhmaṇa-son (to be offered) as a victim in that (sacrifice).

Hearing these words of them, the brāhmaṇa (i.e. Viśvāmitra) became compassionate. 'Let even my life depart; (but) the boy

be happy. Those people who in this world cast their life like (a blade of) grass for a child, or a brāhmaṇa, or their master, obtain eternal worlds.'

41-44a. Thus thinking in his mind, the best brāhmaṇa said: "Leaving this brāhmaṇa-son to be offered as a victim in the sacrifice, (please) quickly take me. This is an excellent boy. Having obtained birth in this mundane existence, this child has not got any happiness. How (then) will he die (i.e. Why should he die)? O messengers, when he came from his house, his unlucky parents became unhappy. Indeed he has as it were gone to Yama's house." Having heard these words of him, the messengers said to the brāhmaṇa:

44b-48. "O wise brāhmaṇa, how shall we take an old man like you, without the order of king Dīnānātha?" Speaking thus the messengers then went to the city of the king. The sage also went to the city of the king. The sage also went to the sacrificial chamber with the host of the messengers. The messengers told the king the brāhmaṇa's gesture. He, hearing that, and with his mind full of doubt said to him: "If by performing this sacrifice without a victim I get a son, then you (may) take (back) this son of the brāhmaṇa."

The sage (Viśvāmitra) said:

49-62a. O king, when the sacrifice is performed, a mighty son will be born. Do not entertain a doubt about this. (Your) seeing (me) will not be fruitless.

Hearing these words of him (i.e. of Viśvāmitra), the king with joy performed the sacrifice with the 'complete oblation' with (the help of) all the sages. Then that best sage took the brāhmaṇa's son (with him) and went to the city named Daśapura; and having gone to his house the sage said (these) words: "O brāhmaṇa, you are staying at home." (The brāhmaṇa said): "O sage, I am staying as if I am dead. The king forcibly took (away) my son. What shall I do? O brāhmaṇa, when our son had gone, our eyes became blind due to weeping." O brāhmaṇa, when the best sage said, "See your son (and) take him (back)", the brāhmaṇa and his wife became glad. For the sake of the son, the two in a moment went out;

and due to perfection of the sage the eyes of the two quickly obtained light (i.e. power of seeing); and then on seeing the son the two drank for a long time the lotus-like face of the son with their bee-like eyes, and repeatedly saluted the sage, and O brāhmaṇa, the two i.e. the brāhmaṇa and his wife, who spoke agreeably, said these words: "O sage, you have indeed made to us a good present of our life." O brāhmaṇa, the sage, the ocean of kindness, having given them blessings, went to his own hermitage. Having the great seat of Viṣṇu at his hand, the magnanimous sage practised a great penance difficult to be obtained (i.e. practised) even by deities. O brāhmaṇa, when some time passed, the king obtained a son. He was handsome, proper for a king, and like the moon in the ocean. O brāhmaṇa, the king too, free from grief and with curiosity arisen in him enjoyed like a god wealth on the earth.

62b-64. He, who protects brāhmaṇas by giving his life and wealth, goes to Viṣṇu's abode, from which a return (to the mortal world) is difficult to have. Those who here (i.e. on the earth) recite or hear devoutly from a brāhmaṇa the story, or the account, or (even) one verse, go to Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Importance of the Vow of Janmāṣṭamī

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, O you very wise one, tell me (about) Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī, and its excellent importance, (and) emancipate me from the great ocean (of the mundance existene).

Sūta said:

2-8. O brāhmaṇa, he who devoutly observes the (vow) Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī, ultimately goes to Viṣṇu's city along with a crore (members) of his family. O best brāhmaṇa, when Aṣṭamī falls on a Wednesday or Monday in conjunction with Rohiṇī, it gives salvation to a crore (members) of his family. Even if a great sinner observes (this) excellent vow, he is freed from all sins and

in the end goes to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, that mean man who does not observe (the vow of) Kṛṣṇajanmāṣṭamī, meets with misery here (i.e. in this world) and after death he would go to hell. That foolish woman who does not observe the vow of Kṛṣṇajanmāṣṭamī goes to a terrible hell year after year. That foolish man who eats (food) on the day of Janmāṣṭamī, attains to a great hell. I am telling (you) the truth and truth (only). Formerly Dilīpa asked the best sage Vasiṣṭha. Listen to that (conversation), destroying all sins, O you very intelligent one.

Dilīpa said :

9-10. O great sage, tell me, I desire to hear (about) the Aṣṭamī in the dark fortnight of the month of Bhādrapada on which Viṣṇu was born. How was the lord, holding a conch, a disc and a mace, born in (i.e. from) the womb of Devakī, to do what and for what purpose (was he born from her womb)?

Vaiṣṭha said :

11-21. O king, I shall (tell you). I shall tell you for what purpose the lord of the world left the heaven and was born on the earth. Formerly the Earth was oppressed by kings like Kaṁsa. She, struck by Kaṁsa's messenger who was proud of his office, cried again and again, went with her eyes rolling to that place where the chief of gods, the lord of Umā and the bull-bannered god remained to tell him: "O lord, I am struck by Kaṁsa". Tears flowed (down her cheeks); she had become pale and insulted. The great god, seeing her weeping, came, with his lower lip throbbing with anger to the house of the Creator. Having gone to Brahmā he asked him for the destruction of Kaṁsa. (He said to Brahmā:) "O Brahman, along with Viṣṇu, produce (i.e. find out) a means". Having heard those words of the lord (i.e. Śiva), Brahmā went to the milky ocean where Viṣṇu was lying asleep on the serpent. Mounting upon the back of a swan he (i.e. Brahmā) came to Viṣṇu. Having gone there, the Creator, the best among the speakers, joined by gods led by Hara (i.e. Śiva), praised him softly with words: "Salutation to the lotus-eyed one, Viṣṇu, the highest soul, the protector of the world. O you lord of Lakṣmī, salutation to you." Having heard this praise from

them, Viṣṇu said to all gods with saddened faces: "How (i.e. for what reason) have you come?"

Brahmā said :

22-26. O god, O lord of the world, listen, I (shall) tell you why we have come, O best of the gods, O cause of the worlds. King Kaṁsa has become arrogant due to the boon given by Śiva. He has become unconquerable. He has struck the Earth; has afflicted her with the blow of his hand. After a boon was granted to him he was deceived by a trick. (He had said:) "O Śiva, I should not meet with death except through my sister's son." Therefore, O god, having gone to Gokula, and obtained birth in (i.e. from) Devakī's womb, go yourself to kill that unconquerable Kaṁsa.

The god, sent forth by Brahmā, said to Śiva: "O lord of gods, hand over Pārvatī. Having remained for a year, she will go."

27-49. With Pārvatī as his protector the god holding a conch, a disc, and a mace, undertook his journey to Mathurā. The mace-holder there (i.e. at Mathurā) obtained birth in (i.e. from) the womb of Devakī. The lotus-eyed Pārvatī resorted to the womb of Yaśodā. Having rested in (Devakī's) womb for nine months and nine days, the lord of the world, the enemy of Kaṁsa and the son of Vasudeva, was born (on) the night when Rohiṇī was in conjunction (with the Moon), when clouds were thundering, of the day called Aṣṭamī, (falling) in the dark fortnight of the month of Bhādrapada. Yaśodā, the daughter of Virāṭa and the wife of Nanda, gave birth to a daughter. Ānakadundubhi (i.e. Vasudeva) seeing his son, having lotus-like navel, and eyes like lotus-petals, began to be joyful, when Devakī, trembling with the fear of the demon, viz. Kaṁsa said (to him): "O lord, go, and hand over the son to Vairāṭī (i.e. Yaśoda). Having given (our) son to Yaśodā, bring (here) her daughter." Hearing her words Vasudeva also was grieved. Placing the son on his side, he went to Yaśodā. On his way Yamunā was full of water, fearful, very long, having deep water and flooded. Seeing this, Vasudeva remained on the bank watching Yamunā and afflicted with grief he cried through anxiety: "What (shall) I do? Where (shall) I go? Even destiny has deceived me. Now, how shall I go to Yaśodā, to Nanda's

house?" At that time, Viṣṇu gladly deceived, by means of a trick, his father who watching Yamunā remained on her bank for a moment. He looked (at Yamunā) again. In a moment she became (i.e. her water was) as high as the knee. Happy on seeing her (like that) he rose and started going. The lord of the world resorted to his magical power and fell into the water from his side. Seeing the son fallen (into the water) he wailed loudly and was extremely grieved. That Creator again deceived him by adoptnig a great trick. (He cried): "O lord of the worlds, protect me. O best god, protect my son." Seeing his father crying, (Kṛṣṇa) the enemy of Kaṁsa, sported repeatedly in the water and with compassion again went to (i.e. clasped) the bosom of his father. Then with him the best of the the Yadus went to Nanda's abode. Having given the son to Yaśodā, he brought her daughter. Then having come to his abode, he handed over the daughter (of Yaśodā) to his wife (Devakī). The news that Devakī had delivered was received by the enemy of (Devakī's) son. Then his messengers set out to bring (either) the son (or) the daughter. Those messengers of Kaṁsa, having come (there), proceeded to take the daughter. Having dragged her forcibly from Devakī and Vasudeva, the messengers of Kaṁsa, seized her and gave her to the enemy of gods. That great unconquerable king having held her was frightened. Kaṁsa, the greatest among the demons, seeing her whose complexion was like pure gold, whose face was like the full moon, and whose eyes were like flashes of lightning, and who was smiling, ordered: "Take her and kill her (by dropping) her on a slab of stone." Receiving the order, the demons proceeded to destroy her. Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī) suddenly went to the sky.

Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī) said :

50. O king, listen, I shall tell you where your greatest enemy is. O greatest of the demons, your killer is hidden in Nanda's house.

Vasiṣṭha said :

51-57. Having spoken like this, the goddess went to her abode. Having heard the words of the goddess, king Kaṁsa was extremely pained. He said to his sister, Pūtanā: "You go to Nanda's house. Killing the son fraudulently, obtain many things

that you desire, which I shall give for killing my enemy. O you auspicious one, go very quickly." That demoness, having received (Kaṁsa's) order, went to Gokula. Taking up an illusory form of a beautiful lady, she entered Gokula. Holding poison in her breasts, she went to kill (Kṛṣṇa). Having entered unnoticed through the door of the cowherds' house, she went inside, took up the child, gave him her breast and obtained beatitude. Then having hurled (the demon) Śakaṭa, and having crushed Tṛṇāvarta and others, and having curbed Kāliya, he went to the city of Madhu (i.e. Mathurā). Having gone there he killed the cruel Kaṁsa and vanquished his wrestlers. O king, I have told you this vow of (i.e. to be observed on) the day of Viṣṇu's birth.

58-62a. On hearing it, the sins (of the person who hears it), perish. (Then) what will happen on observing it? A man or a woman who observes this vow of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, obtains unequalled wealth as (much as is) desired in this (very) existence. (The vow should) not be observed on the third or the sixth day joined with the previous day. For those who desire religious merit, Aṣṭamī is Ekādaśī; (they should) carefully avoid Aṣṭamī joined with Saptamī. Even without (the rise of) the constellation, Aṣṭamī, joined with Navamī should be observed (as a fast day) if the constellation has risen, and there is partial Aṣṭamī and full Navamī (then the vow should be observed). Aṣṭamī that is united with (i.e. has) Rohiṇī (risen) for a short time, should be (regarded as) complete.

62b-67. O king, what is the use of observing crores of vows if Aṣṭamī with Rohiṇī falls on a Wednesday or with the Moon (i.e. on a Monday). Such Aṣṭamī is obtained or not obtained even after hundreds of years when it falls on a Monday or Wednesday. Without (the rise of) the constellation (Rohiṇī) the vow of Aṣṭamī should not be observed when the Aṣṭamī is joined with Navamī. The vow of Aṣṭamī should be observed even on the seventh day, if it is joined with Rohiṇī. When the eighth day of Kṛṣṇa is (there) even for fortyeight seconds, for kāṣṭhā (i.e. one thirtieth part of a kalā, which is equal to fortyeight seconds) or for a period of fortyeight minutes on the ninth day, the vow of Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī should be observed. That Aṣṭamī is acceptable (i.e. the vow should be observed even) on the ninth day, but not on that eighth day which is united with the seventh day. What (then

should be told) about Wednesday and especially about Monday? What (should be told) about Aṣṭamī that is united with Navamī? It gives salvation to crores of the members of the family. If there is the connection with the seventh day, (even) by (the measure of time called) pala, then a man should avoid the vow of Aṣṭamī (on that day) like the pitcher of water full of the water of Gaṅgā coming in contact with a drop of liquor.

Dilīpa said :

68. O great sage, O lord, tell (me), who first observed (this vow). Who brought it to light? What is its religious merit? What is its fruit?

Vasiṣṭha said :

69-77. The great king Citrasena indulged in great sins and in illicit intercourse, and stole the gold of a brāhmaṇa. He was always delighted with (i.e. always drank) liquor and flesh(-eating). Thus he was full of sins, and always took delight in killing animals. He always conversed with cāṇḍālas and the fallen. The king who was like this thought of hunting. Knowing (that there was) a tiger in the forest and carefully surrounding it, he spoke these words to all his soldiers: "I alone shall kill it. If anyone else strikes him, he will be undoubtedly killed." The tiger came along the path of the king. The king, though ashamed, then went after the tiger. With much trouble and difficulty he became intent upon killing the tiger. In the evening he oppressed with hunger and thirst (remained) on the bank of Yamunā. That was the eighth day, united with Rohiṇī—the birth-day (of Kṛṣṇa). O king, cāṇḍāla-girls observed the vow in (i.e. on the bank of) Yamunā with many articles as presents, and very auspicious incense and lamps. Seeing the sandal, the flowers and (other) very charming articles like saffron, and food with many excellences, the kings' mind was perturbed.

The king said :

78a. For want of food my life shall certainly and instantly depart today.

The women said :

78b-85. O sinless king, on the day of Janmāṣṭamī of (i.e.

sacred to) Viṣṇu, you should not eat the hard flesh of a vulture, (of) a crow or of a cow, so also (you should not eat) food. There is no doubt (you have formerly) eaten it. What blemish would not come to the men who in this world eat (on the day of Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī)? For him who, when his vital airs remain in his body (i.e. while alive), has not observed (the vow of) Jayantī, and has not observed a fast (on that day), the punishment is (going to) Yama's abode. His manes do not accept whatever he has offered to them with proper rites. When food is taken on a Jayantī, all the manes are thrown (down).

Hearing this, O king, the king then observed that vow. Being delighted, he brought a few flowers, a little sandal, a small (piece of) cloth, observed the vow, and broke the fast at the end of the (Aṣṭamī) day. By the power of this vow Citrasena along with his dead ancestors got into a divine aeroplane and went to Viṣṇu's abode. Men obtain that fruit from the Aṣṭamī-vow which they get after going to Mathurā and seeing the lotus-like face of Kṛṣṇa. The poor obtain that fruit by observing the Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī-vow which they get by going to Dvārakā and seeing Viṣṇu, the lord of the universe.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Greatness of a Brāhmaṇa

Śaunaka said:

1. O you very wise one, O you ocean of compassion, kindly tell me the importance of a brāhmaṇa, the best of all the castes.

Sūta said:

2-8. O best brāhmaṇa, a brāhmaṇa is the preceptor of all the castes. He should be known to be the resort of all gods, and he is actually Viṣṇu, the lord. O best brāhmaṇa, the wealth etc. of him who devoutly salutes a brāhmaṇa, looking upon him as Viṣṇu, enhances. Viṣṇu would always desire to cut off

the head of him who, being proud, does not even casually salute a brāhmaṇa. Those of sinful minds, who hate a brāhmaṇa who has committed an offence, should be known to be hating Viṣṇu. They go to a terrible hell. Yama torments with a heated needle the eyes of him who would look angrily at a brāhmaṇa who has come to make a request. The messengers (i.e. servants) of Yama put (a piece of) heated iron into the mouth of the foolish mean man who threatens a brāhmaṇa. Kṛṣṇa himself along with gods eats in the house of those in whose house a brāhmaṇa with penance as his wealth eats.

9-13a. All the sins, like the murder of a brāhmaṇa, of that man who takes just a drop of water (flowing) from the foot of a brāhmaṇa, perish. I tell you the truth—the man who would devoutly wash the feet of a brāhmaṇa, is freed from all sins. That woman who has no sons or that woman whose child was stillborn, would (respectively) have a son, would have her child alive. Those holy places which exist in the world, those holy places which exist in an ocean, those holy places that exist in a sea, exist in the feet of a brāhmaṇa. He whose head is always sprinkled with the water from the feet of a brāhmaṇa, has (indeed) bathed at all the places (and) is free from all sins.

13b-20. O you Śaunaka, having penance as your wealth, listen, I shall tell you the greatness destroying all sins—the history, of the water (flowing) from the feet of a brāhmaṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, formerly there was a śūdra named Bhīma who was engaged in the occupation of a vaiśya. Even in Dvāpara (yuga), he, a cruel man who killed a thousand brāhmaṇas, was satisfied with a vaiśya wife. That Bhīma had given up the conduct of a śūdra and had illegitimate connection with his preceptor's wife. How can I tell each one (of his sins)? The sins of the śūdra, viz. Bhīma, of a wicked mind, could not be counted. Once he went to a brāhmaṇa's house. He made up his mind to enter the brāhmaṇa's house and to take (away) his money. He remained near the outer gate (of the house) of the brāhmaṇa. He spoke piteous words to the brāhmaṇa, the treasure of penance: "O lord, listen to my words. I think you are kind. I am oppressed with hunger; give me food, (otherwise) my life will soon depart (i.e. I shall die soon)."

The brāhmaṇa said:

21-23. O you who are oppressed with hunger, listen to my words. There is nobody (in my house) to cook food. There is rice. Take it and eat it as (much) as you like. I do not have a father or a mother; I do not have a son or a brother; I do not have a wife or the brother of my mother (i.e. maternal uncle). Leaving me all of them are dead. O guest, being jobless and unlucky I am staying in the house (all) alone. Viṣṇu alone lives in my abode. I do not know anyone else but him.

Bhīma said:

24. O best brāhmaṇa, I too do not have any (relative). I am a śūdra by caste. I shall remain in your house always serving you.

Sūta said:

25-33. Hearing (those) words of (i.e. uttered by) him, the brāhmaṇa who was delighted, quickly cooked food and gave it to him, O ascetic. He too being delighted lived in the brāhmaṇa's house doing to the brāhmaṇa affectionate and good service. 'Today or tomorrow I shall kill him, I shall take away his money and make it mine. Certainly I shall take it (away).' Thinking and deciding like this, he did, by (bowing) his head, whatever work like washing his feet, the brāhmaṇa would tell (him to do); (thus) he was free from sins. The brāhmaṇa having sipped water, everyday put before him under some protext, the water flowing from his feet. Once a thief came there to take away money. At night having drawn out the panels (of the door) he entered the interior of the house. Seeing Bhīma (there), he came with a staff in his hand to strike him. The thief having broken his head, quickly ran away. Then Viṣṇu's soldiers, holding conches, discs, and maces came (there) to take Bhīma whose sins had gone. O brāhmaṇa, a divine chariot to which royal swans were yoked, also came there. Getting into it, he went to Viṣṇu's abode, not easily accessible. I have narrated this greatness of a brāhmaṇa. It destroys the sin of him who listens to it.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Importance of Ekādaśī

Śaunaka said:

1. O illustrious one, tell me the importance of Ekādaśī, and also what its fruit is and the sin (that accrues) to him who does not observe it.

Sūta said:

2-40. Now why should I tell the importance of (the vow of) Ekādaśī? The messengers of Yama, who cause fear to all beings, are frightened on hearing the name of Ekādaśī. There is no doubt about this. A man should observe a fast on the auspicious (day of) Ekādaśī which is the best of all vows, should keep awake and highly decorate Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, the man who worships Viṣṇu with Tulasī-leaves, obtains the fruit of a crore of sacrifices. That sin which is said to be due to illicit intercourse, perishes due to a fast on the (day of) Ekādaśī. O brāhmaṇa, he who would offer a lamp full of ghee (to Viṣṇu) on the Viṣṇu-day (i.e. Ekādaśī), in the end goes to Viṣṇu's place. "Do not bring to me these meritorious beings who observe a fast on (the day of) Viṣṇu's going to bed or his turning aside, and especially on the Prabodhinī (Ekādaśī)." Thus orders Yama to his messengers day and night. Ekādaśī is dear to the lord of the world (i.e. Viṣṇu) and enhances religious merit. Viṣṇu does burn the body (of a man) on (his) eating food on that (day). Fie upon the life, wealth, handsomeness and conduct of those, the most sinful ones, who eat food on (the day of) Ekādaśī! They are the eaters of feces. O best brāhmaṇa, on merely eating food on Ekādaśī(-day), many and various sins attend upon the eater. As a great sin would accrue by having coitus with women on the new moon day, in the same way sin would be there (i.e. would be committed by a man) on eating on an Ekādaśī (-day). Beings (i.e. men) become diseased, crippled, and suffer from cough, and congenital leprosy on eating food on that (day). They become (i.e. are born as) village-pigs and are reduced to poverty. O best brāhmaṇa, people are bound by the king on eating (i.e. if they eat) on that (day), O brāhmaṇa;

(all) the sins that are there in the worldly existence resort to food. There would be escape from hell of those who commit all sins (but) drink water (on that day only) through the order (of a superior person etc.). There is no escape (from hell) for those men who eat on Viṣṇu's day. Sin due to crores of brāhmaṇa-murders would accrue to those men for each kind of food that they eat. O men, listen, listen, I tell again, I tell again: On the day of Viṣṇu, (food) should not be eaten, food should not be eaten, food should not be eaten. That fruit is obtained by him who fasts on an (Ekādaśī-) day which is obtained by bathing in Gaṅgā etc. and at holy places or at the (time of) lunar or solar eclipse. He having worshipped (i.e. who worships) with lotus-garlands lord Viṣṇu after having properly broken the fast, does not have a place in mother's womb (i.e. is not reborn). O brāhmaṇa, he who makes a decoration in Viṣṇu's abode (i.e. temple) on an Ekādaśī(-day), gets the highest status and would stay in Viṣṇu's house. Those who having waited for the Ekādaśī-(day) observe a fast on that day, undoubtedly stay in Viṣṇu's city. There is no doubt that those whose minds are clung to the devotion of Viṣṇu, go to the highest place of Viṣṇu. Those too who have no longing for others' wealth and whose minds are contented, certainly have (i.e. go to) Viṣṇu's city. Those best men, who having encountered famine give food to creatures, undoubtedly get (i.e. go to) Viṣṇu's abode. Those, who cast their life for protecting cows, brāhmaṇas, (their) master, and a woman, certainly get (i.e. go to) Viṣṇu's city. Creatures (i.e. men) should never observe a fast on (an Ekādaśī day) joined with Daśamī (i.e. the tenth day). O best brāhmaṇa, it should be avoided like the proximity of a wicked man. Having fasted on that day, if the Ekādaśī-day is joined with Daśamī at the break of day, having fasted on that day, there would be Dvādaśī, and breaking of the fast would be on the thirteenth day. A devotee of Viṣṇu should not observe the Ekādaśī-vow on that day if the day-break is said to be the four ghaṭikās of the morning. This is the time of the bath for the ascetics, and is said to be like the water of Gaṅgā. If at the time of day-break Daśamī is seen (to continue), then on that day Ekādaśī destroying religious merit, worldly prosperity and sensual enjoyments, should not be observed. A wise man should avoid the Ekādaśī joined even a little with Daśamī,

as he would abandon a pitcher full of ghee spoiled by the contact of a drop of liquor. When there is the full Ekādaśī (i.e. it falls on the eleventh day) and again continues (in part) on the twelfth day also, then the latter should be observed by ascetics and a householder should observe a fast on the former day. When a part of Ekādaśī does not go beyond Dvādaśī, the merit there is of a hundred sacrifices; and the breaking of the fast (should be done) on the thirteenth day. If the Ekādaśī is omitted and is further united with Dvādaśī, then a man should fast for the entire twelfth day if he desires the highest place. If it is the entire Ekādaśī (day) and if it is there in the morning also, then, if Dvādaśī is after it (commencing on that day) all should observe the (fast of Ekādaśī) on the latter day. Those men whose mind clings to the Ekādaśī-vow, live in heaven and go to Viṣṇu's house. There is no greater means than Ekādaśī for (going to) the next world. He who, full of many sins, observes (a fast on) the day of Viṣṇu, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

41-42. That woman who along with her husband observes (a fast on) the day of Viṣṇu, gets good sons, is fortunate to have a (good) husband, and after death goes to Viṣṇu's abode. O best brāhmaṇa, the religious merit of him, who devoutly offers a lamp before (the image of) Viṣṇu on the day of Viṣṇu (i.e. Ekādaśī), cannot be measured (i.e. is immeasurable).

43-44. O brāhmaṇa, that woman who with her husband keeps awake on the day of Viṣṇu, would stay for a long time with her husband in the abode of Viṣṇu. The religious merit due to an object offered to Viṣṇu on his day is always inexhaustible.

45. Formerly there was (a man) named Vallabha in a city named Kāñcana. The lord of wealth had much wealth.

46-58a. O brāhmaṇa, his very beautiful wife was Hemaprabhā by name. The great characteristic of Kali, viz. being talkative, assaulted (i.e. overpowered) her. O you great ascetic, she would always quarrel with her husband. She would always censure her elders with mean words. She, the impure one, would always secretly eat from the cooking utensils and everyday would offer the remnants of the food to the elders. Her heart was always set on her paramour, (yet) she would say, 'I

am a chaste woman.' She always caused anxiety to her husband by her quarrels. Once seeing her who had come (to him), her husband censured her and struck her who was full of all sins. Full of anger, she went to a vacant house, and without anybody's knowledge slept and remained there and did not (drink and) eat water or food. Fortunately for her on that day of Viṣṇu (there was the festival of) Visṇu's turning upon other side[1]—the Ekādaśī-vow, destroying all sins. Then, when it dawned, Dvādaśī with the Śravaṇā (constellation) came. Then that woman with her mind full of anger, observed two fasts, and became pure; and O brāhmaṇa, on the day of the Jayantī, she died at night. By Yama's order, his fearful messengers with nooses and hammers in their hands came there to take her like that (to Yama's abode). When they decided after binding her to take her to Yama's abode, Viṣṇu's messengers holding conches, discs and maces came (there). Having cut off the noose, they put her, free from sins and (therefore) pure, into a divine chariot. Surrounded by them, she then went to Viṣṇu's auspicious house, not easily accessible (even) to gods.

58b-60. O best brāhmaṇa, I have told you the importance of Viṣṇu's day. He who observes this vow even unwillingly goes to Viṣṇu's abode. A man who would go to Viṣṇu's temple on an Ekādaśī-day to offer him a lamp, obtains the fruit of a horse sacrifice at every step. Those who listen to or read the Purāṇas on Viṣṇu's day, obtain, for every letter (listened to or read), the fruit due to the gift of a tawny cow (to a brāhmaṇa).

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1. Pārśvaparivartana—Name of a festival on the eleventh day of the first half of Bhādrapada when Viṣṇu is supposed to turn upon the other side in his sleep.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

How to Win Favour of Viṣṇu

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, kindly tell (me) that due to which act the sins would perish and grace of Viṣṇu would follow.

Sūta said:

2-4. O Śaunaka, I shall tell you what destroys the sins of the listeners, by which Viṣṇu's grace, destroying sins, would take place. O sage, the sin of him, earned during crores of existences disappears, who, with devotion and in many ways, offers on a full moon day worship to the lord of the world, O sage. Certainly the favour of the lord of Śrī would come to him.

5. The sins of him who would devoutly give food to a brāhmaṇa on Dvādaśī, would perish like darkness at day-break.

6-14. Śrī Viṣṇu instantly loves the man who would bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu with milk, sugar etc. on a Dvādaśī day, O brāhmaṇa. The giver who would offer a stone-like flower to Viṣṇu without any hymn, has a downfall. That man who would give a stone-like gift, a foolish brāhmaṇa, does not have religious merit. The foolish brāhmaṇa who, having no knowledge, accepts a gift like wasted fire at the time of deluge, through delusion, would, due to that, go to hell. O brāhmaṇa, the three, viz. a wooden elephant, or a deer drawn in a picture, or a brāhmaṇa having no knowledge, (simply) bear their names. As the water remaining on a path is purified by means of wind or the sun, in the same way the sin of him who devoutly sees the retinue (of a god), perishes. He who would devoutly offer on the full-moon day of the month of Āśvina parched grain with ghee and cowrie for playing to Viṣṇu goes, free from rebirth, to Viṣṇu's place. A man who through folly would not give to Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu is not pleased with him. He who would offer cowries to Viṣṇu on the full-moon day will certainly live in Hari's abode for as many days as the number of cowries (offered).

15-17. O best of brāhmaṇas, formerly in the city of Karavīra lived a cruel and fearful śūdra whose name was Kāladvija. Engaged in his own duty, he destroyed the business of his

master. Once (when) he died, the fearful messengers of Yama came to take him to Yama's abode. Having tied him, they took him (to Yama's abode). Seeing him, Yama asked his minister (Citragupta):

Yama said:

18. O wise minister Citragupta, tell me from the beginning the good or bad deeds of (i.e. done by) him.

Citragupta said:

19-20. This sinner is of a wicked conduct; he has destroyed the business of his master. He does not have religious merit even of the size of an atom. Let him be roasted in hell for a hundred ages of Manu, O king. Then let the cruel one be born in the species of serpents and let him continuously live in a cave.

Sūta said:

21-28. O brāhmaṇa, for that much period he fell into (and lived in) hell, and then, being very unhappy he was born in the species of serpents in a cave. Once, O brāhmaṇa, on the full moon day in the month of Āśvina he threw out from the hole fried grain and cowries. That fell before Viṣṇu. Kind Viṣṇu who removes unhappiness, himself quickly destroyed his sin. When the time for his death arrived, he died. O brāhmaṇa, many messengers of Yama came to take him (to Yama's abode). When after binding him they started taking him to Yama's abode, messengers of Viṣṇu, holding conches, discs and maces came (there). They cut off his nooses and quickly put him whose sins had perished, into a divine chariot. The messengers of Yama ran (away). Surrounded by them the serpent went to Viṣṇu's house. Being free from rebirth he remained before (i.e. near) Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, I certainly do not know what the religious merit of him who devoutly offers fried grain with ghee and cowries to Viṣṇu, would be.

29. O brāhmaṇa, the sins of him who devoutly listens to this chapter destroying sins, perish due to the grace of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Importance of Water Flowing from Viṣṇu's Feet

Śaunaka said :

1. O you ocean of compassion, O you very wise one, tell me from the beginning the greatness of the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, which destroys sins.

Sūta said :

2-11. The water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu destroys all sins and is auspicious. He who would carry (even) a drop of it, would obtain the fruit of (visiting) all the holy places. O brāhmaṇa, the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet destroys the sin of him who touches it; he does not meet with an untimely death and would obtain the fruit of a bath in Gaṅgā. O brāhmaṇa, there is no doubt that the sin in the body of the sinner who would drink the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu, would perish. That man who would devoutly carry on his head the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet along with a Tulasī-leaf in the end goes to Viṣṇu's abode. Men obtain that fruit by touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, which is obtained by giving (pieces of) gold resembling Meru. That fruit is surely obtained by offering water to Viṣṇu's feet and touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, which is obtained by (offering) thousands of crores of cows. The fruit that is obtained by touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, is crores of times greater than the fruit which is obtained by performing thousands of crores of sacrifices. O brāhmaṇa, the fruit (obtained) by touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet is greater than the fruit got by men by giving a crore of virgins (in marriage to worthy grooms). That fruit which a man obtains by giving a crore of elephants or by giving a crore of horses is obtained by a man by touching the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, a man would get a larger fruit by touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, than that which he would obtain by giving (the earth) with the seven islands along with crops (growing on it).

12. O brāhmaṇa, listen, I shall tell you in brief. (What is the

use of) telling more? By touching the water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, a sinner goes to Viṣṇu's house.

Śaunaka said :

13. O Sūta, kindly tell me which creature formerly reached Viṣṇu's abode by touching and drinking the water flowing from Viṣṇu's feet.

Sūta said:

14-18. Formerly in Tretāyuga there was a sinful brāhmaṇa by name Sudarśana. O best brāhmaṇa, on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu he would always eat (food, i.e. would not observe a fast). He always censured the sacred texts and always condemned the vows. Except his own belly he did not recognise anything else. O brāhmaṇa, when once the time of his death arrived, he died. The messengers of Yama came (to his place), and binding him they took him to Yama's abode. Seeing him, the brother of Yamunā (i.e. Yama) angrily asked his minister: "O minister, tell (me) from the root (i.e. from the beginning) what his merit is and what his sin is. This brāhmaṇa seems to be a great sinner and a man of cruel acts".

Citragupta said :

19-21. Listen to his sins(s). He has no merit even of the size of an atom (to his credit). O lord, even on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, he always used to eat (food). O king, that mean man who would eat on the day of (i.e. sacred to) the lord of Kamalā (i.e. on the day sacred to viṣṇu), would eat feces and goes to a fearful hell. Give him a place in a hell for a hundred periods of Manu. Then he will be born in the stock of a śūdra.

Sūta said :

22-28. O brāhmaṇa, then, by Yama's order his terrible messengers threw him into feces (where he remained) for more than a hundred ages of Manu. Freed from there he became (i.e. was born as) a village-pig on the earth. For a long time he would remain in hell due to his having eaten food on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. Then, O brāhmaṇa, the time of his death arrived, and he died. He obtained a birth (i.e. was born) in the stock

of crow and always ate feces. O brāhmaṇa, one day this crow of a śabara drank the water, after the śabara's death, (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet and remaining (i.e. collected) at the door (of the temple) and being killed by a hunter, fell (dead) on the same day. He, the eater of offerings, got into a divine, auspicious chariot to which royal swans were yoked, and went to Viṣṇu's abode. (I have) told you the greatness of the water (flowing) from (Viṣṇu's) feet. The sin of a sinful man who listens to it, perishes.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Purificatory Acts for One Guilty of Illegitimate Intercourse

Śaunaka said :

1. O Sūta, tell me fully, with what can a man who having through delusion had illegitimate intercourse, be purified?

Sūta said :

2-8a. The best brāhmaṇa, who cohabits with a cāṇḍāla woman or an outcaste woman, should observe three fasts, then should observe the Prājāpatya vow, get clean-shaved with (even) the tuft of hair on the crown of his head (removed), and should give a couple of cows (to a brāhmaṇa). The brāhmaṇa becomes purified after giving proper present (to a brāhmaṇa). If a kṣatriya or a vaiśya cohabits with a cāṇḍālī, he should (observe) the Kṛcchra Prājāpatya (vow) and should give two pairs of cows to (a brāhmaṇa). O you ascetic, if a śūdra cohabits with an outcaste woman, he should give four pairs of cows (to a brāhmaṇa) and observe the Prājāpatya vow. If a man being infatuated, cohabits with his mother or sister or daughter, or his daughter-in-law, he should observe three Kṛcchra (-vows). Having observed three Cāndrāyaṇa (-vows), he should give three pairs of cows. Getting clean-shaved with (even) the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (removed), he should drink the mixture of the five products of a

cow. O ascetic, in this case he becomes purified even after making offerings into fire.

8b-10. O best brāhmaṇa, if a man through infatuation, cohabits with the wife (other than his mother) of his father, or his mother's sister, or his preceptor's wife, or his maternal uncle's wife, or his brother's wife born in the same family, he should observe a couple of Prājāpatya (-vows). O brāhmaṇa, he should observe three Cāndrāyaṇa-vows, (should give) five pairs of cows to brāhmaṇas and should give them a present. He is (by doing so) purified. There is no doubt about this.

11-14a. That fool who cohabits with a cow, should observe three fasts; there is no doubt that he is purified by giving a cow and food. He who cohabits with a prostitute, a female ass, a female pig or a monkey or a she-buffalow, should remain without eating in mud after having thrown himself there upto his neck. He is purified after three nights. He should observe fast for three nights after having got clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of his head (removed). Undoubtedly he is purified on remaining in water for a night.

14b-17a. O you ascetic, he who being infatuated by love, would cohabit with a brāhmaṇa-woman should observe three Prājāpatya (-vows) and three Cāndrāyaṇa (-vows). Similarly he should give three cows (to a brāhmaṇa). The brāhmaṇa woman should drink the mixture of the products of a cow for five nights, O brāhmaṇa. There is no doubt that by giving a pair of cows and a present (to a brāhmaṇa) she is purified. When a man cohabits with the wife of someone else he should observe (the vow of) Kṛcchra Sāntapana.

17b-24. A woman is like a bar. Therefore, he should avoid her. If a man (even) once cohabits with a woman out of his caste or a mean one, he should observe Prājāpatya Kṛcchra. There is no doubt that thereby he is purified. A woman is like a burning charcoal. A man is like ghee. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, he should never remain in her vicinity. O brāhmaṇa, that woman, the destroyer of the family, who conceives (due to cohabitation) with her paramour, should be altogether abandoned. There is no blemish in doing so. That woman who would, leaving her own relatives, go (away) from her house, is spoiled, has fallen from the family. One should have no contact with her again. That

woman who, being infatuated, cohabits with another man (who is not her husband), should observe the Prājāpatya Kṛcchra, and then should drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. Then she should give a pair of cows (to a brāhmaṇa). She is (thus) undoubtedly purified. When a childish brāhmaṇa woman, being deluded, cohabits with a stranger, she should be abandoned by (her) men. There is no blemish (in doing so). O brāhmaṇa, that brāhmaṇa who, being deluded by passion of love, would cohabit with a brāhmaṇa-woman, should give a cow and sesamum. Undoubtedly he is (thereby) purified.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Purificatory Acts for Other Sins

Sūta said:

1. O brāhmaṇa, listen, I shall tell you, how those who, through ignorance, have eaten feces (or drunk) urine or have sipped liquor, are purified.

2-4a. O sage, he should observe two Prājāpatya (-vows); he should go to a holy place. He should give a bull and eleven cows, and then should get himself clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (removed). Having gone to all crossways he should observe the Prājāpatya (-vow). Then he should give a pair of cows and drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. There is no doubt that he is purified after having fed brāhmaṇas.

4b-8. If a man eats the food of a cāṇḍāla or drinks his water knowingly or while in a difficulty, he should observe Kṛcchra Cāndrāyaṇa; (and) having got himself clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (removed), he should drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. One or two or three or four cows should be respectively given to brāhmaṇas if he eats the food of a cāṇḍāla or of (i.e. prepared by) a woman recently delivered or food which is not fit to be eaten or water which should not be drunk. If knowingly or while in difficulty he eats

the food left over by a śūdra, he should observe two Prājāpatya-vows and three Cāndrāyaṇa-vows. O brāhmaṇa, then he should give a couple of cows and drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. Then, after offering oblations into fire and having fed many brāhmaṇas, he would certainly be purified.

9. There is no doubt that if (a portion of) the food is eaten by rats, mongooses or cats it is purified, when it is sprinkled over with water mixed with sesamum and darbhas, O brāhmaṇa.

10-11. O brāhmaṇa, a man who eats an onion, garlic, a pot-herb, bottle-gourd, a small red variety of garlic and meat, should observe the Cāndrāyaṇa-vow. Due to his doing vile acts a śūdra loves liquor and meat. One should avoid from (i.e. keep at) a distance such a śūdra like a cāṇḍāla.

12. Those who are engaged in serving the twice-born who avoid liquor and meat, who are engaged in giving gifts and in their own duties, should be known to be best vṛṣalas.

13-17a. O brāhmaṇa, if a brāhmaṇa unknowingly eats (food) in a family where impurity is caused by child-birth or by death, he would be purified by reciting the Gāyatrī(-hymn) ten thousand times. O ascetic, a kṣatriya would be purified by reciting it thousands of times, and a cāṇḍāla by (taking) the mixtures of the five products of a cow. A man of a (higher) caste, who, even unknowingly, would drink ghee, or water of curd contained in a vessel of a low-caste man, should observe the Prājāpatya vow. He should give many gifts. By offering oblations into the fire according to the proper rite he is purified. For a śūdra there is no fast. He is purified just by giving gifts. Observing a fast day and night he should get himself clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (removed).

17b-19a. O brāhmaṇa, a man who is beaten by the low-caste ones with sticks etc. should observe (either) the Prājāpatya-vow or the Cāndrāyaṇa-vow. He should get himself clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (removed) and should drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. Then he should give a couple of cows and offer oblations of food etc. into fire.

19b-23. O brāhmaṇa, if a man takes liquor knowingly or casually in his house, he should be dropped from (i.e. driven out of) the family. A man who destroys cow's seed or cuts off shoots, or steals gold, should observe Kṛcchra and three Prājāpatya

-vows. Having got himself clean-shaved with the tuft of hair on the crown of his head (removed), he should also drink the mixture of the five products of a cow. In the same way he should thrice offer oblations into fire. O ascetic, food and water from him may be accepted. He should eat in the morning for three days without begging. For three days he should not eat. This is the Prājāpatya -vow.

24-29. O sage, he should drink cow's urine, cow-dung, (cow's) milk, curd, ghee and water mixed with kuśa for two days and should observe fast for a night. This is said to be Kṛcchra Sāntapana which removes all sins. He should eat one morsel for three days in the morning and in the evening without begging and should fast for three days. This vow is (called) Atikṛcchra. O brāhmaṇa, he should drink hot water, milk and ghee for three days. O sage, he should bathe once (a day). This is said to be Tapta-Kṛcchra. Not taking food for twelve days is known as Parāka Kṛcchra, which removes sin and is well-known. He should increase one morsel everyday in the bright half and reduce one morsel everyday during the dark half. He should not eat when the moon has waned (i.e. on the new-moon day). This is known as the Cāndrāyaṇa -vow. A brāhmaṇa should eat four morsels in the morning, four when the sun has set (i.e. in the evening). This is known as Śiśu-Cāndrāyaṇa.

30. A woman who destroys a pumpkin gourd, should drink the mixture of the five products of a cow for three days and should give five pumpkin gourds along with gold and garments (to a brāhmaṇa). (Then) O ascetic, water and food of (i.e. offered by) her may be accepted.

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Greatness of the Worship of Rādhā-Dāmodara

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, (tell me which) you said to be the (deeds of) merit, doing which, the frogs (men) in the blinding well due to darkness, will cross the ocean of mundane existence.

Sūta said:

2-10. That woman who, bathing (every) morning in Kārtika, being dear to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, being composed and devoutly worshipping Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, gives up eating meat etc. and is engaged in serving her husband, goes to Viṣṇu's place called *Goloka* which is very difficult to obtain (i.e. to reach). She who would offer incense and lamp to Rādhā and Dāmodara (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) in Kārtika, goes, with her sin abandoned (i.e. removed), to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, that woman who would offer a garment to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa would, for a long time, live in the abode to Śrī Viṣṇu. She who offers to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa fragrant flowers and garlands in the month of Kārtika, goes to Viṣṇu's abode. Also she who would offer sandal and make an offering like sugar to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, would go to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, the merit of that woman who gives something to a brāhmaṇa in the month of Kārtika to please Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, becomes inexhaustible. O brāhmaṇa, that woman who devoutly worships Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the month of Kārtika goes (to Viṣṇu's abode); she would not live in hell for long, even if she was a widow in a previous existence or was not dear to her husband.

11-18. O brāhmaṇa, in olden days in the Tretāyuga there lived a śūdra named Śaṅkara in the Saurāṣṭra country. His wife was Kalipriyā by name. She always longed for a paramour, and looked upon her husband like (a blade of) grass (i.e. treated him disgracefully). 'This husband is not proper for me, my lord is some other man.' Thinking like this she always gave him food that was left over. The very foolish woman (drank) liquor and ate meat due to the company of mean people. The cruel

one always reproached her husband at her will. 'He is a rope (tied to my) feet; why did he not die? When he dies I shall enjoy at will.' O brāhmaṇa, thinking like this to her mind, she made an agreement with a paramour as: "We shall go to another country". O brāhmaṇa, at night she cut off the throat of her husband with a sword for the sake of her paramour, and went to the rendezvous. O brāhmaṇa, the paramour that had come there was eaten up by a tiger. Seeing it she wept and fell down in a swoon. Being composed after a long time the foolish woman wept piteously.

Kalipriyā said:

19. Having killed my own husband, I approached a stranger. Due to my (ill luck) a tiger has eaten up that lord of mine (also). What shall I do? Where shall I go? I am deceived by the Creator.

Sūta said:

20. O brāhmaṇa, then Kalipriyā came to her own house. Putting her mouth into that of her husband she wept.

Kalipriyā said:

21-22. O lord, what a very terrible deed have I done? Which world shall I go to? O lord, speak (at least) a few words. I, who am very much condmened, reproached you at will. O lord, you are not at all speaking. There is not a single sin that I have not committed.

Sūta said:

23-26. She saluted his feet, and went to another city. Having entered it, that woman saw many meritorious people, devotees of Viṣṇu, engaged in bathing in the Narmadā (river) in the morning in the month in Kārtika. Seeing there even women devoutly worshipping Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa with the sounds of conches with great festivity, with sandal and flowers, incense and lamps, pieces of cloth and fruits of various kinds, with perfumes used to scent the breath, asked them modestly: "O ladies, (please) tell me, what is this that you are doing."

The ladies said:

27-33. O mother, in the morning in Kārtika, the best of all months, we offer the auspicious worship to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, which removes all sins. (Due to that worship) sin earned in a crore of existences is destroyed, and Viṣṇu's abode is reached.

Giving up (eating) flesh, she performed the worship on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, being free from blemish, she died on the full-moon-day. Yama's servants, full of anger, quickly came there to take her to Yama's abode and tied her (body) with leather straps. Then there came in an aeroplane made of gold Viṣṇu's messengers holding conches, discs, maces, lotuses and struck them with the edges of the discs (i.e. with sharp discs); the messengers of Yama ran away. She got into an aeroplane which was made of gold and to which royal swans were yoked. Surrounded by them, she went to Viṣṇu's abode. There she lived for a long time enjoying pleasures as she liked. O brāhmaṇa, she who would worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, goes, due to her sins having perished, to the charming world called *Goloka*.

34. The sin earned during a crore of existences of him who listens to this or the sin earned during a crore of existences of a woman who, being purified, listens to this, perishes.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Restrictions While Observing the Kārtika Vow

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, O sage, please tell me properly the rites and restrictions (to be observed) in the best month Kārtika.

Sūta said:

2-7. O best brāhmaṇa, a man, being pure, should (begin to) observe the vow of the Kārtika month on (i.e. from) the full moon of Āśvina (and should continue it) till the Udbodhinī (i.e.

the eleventh day of the bright fortnight of Kārtika). O brāhmaṇa, a man should excrete or pass urine by facing the north during the day time. He should observe silence (while excreting or passing urine); and O you omniscient one, he should excrete or pass urine by facing the south during the night. O brāhmaṇa, he who has undertaken the vow (of Kārtika) should not excrete or pass urine on a path, in water, in a cow-pen, in a crematory or an anthill. He should not excrete or pass urine at excellent places. Taking pure clay he should first wash his left hand with clay and water for cleansing it twenty times. He should apply it (i.e. the clay) once to his generative organ and five times to his anus, ten times to his left hand, and then ten times to both (his hands), and three times to (each of) his feet. Then he should cleanse his face and then resolve to bathe.

8-10a. Meditating on Dāmodara (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) in his mind, he should then recite this hymn: "O Janārdana, in (the month of) Kārtika I shall every morning have a bath that destroys sins, to please Kṛṣṇa with Rādhā. O Śrīkṛṣṇa, my salutation to Paṅkajanābha (i.e. Viṣṇu) lying in water; my salutation to you along with Rādhā. Accept the objects (I am offering and) be pleased with me."

10b-21a. Then he should bathe and put on the mark. If he, being without the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra[1] (i.e. upright lines made on the forehead), does any act, all that (i.e. the entire) act of him becomes fruitless. This is the truth that I am telling. That body of a human being which is without the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra should not be seen. If one sees it, one should look at the sun. Even a cāṇḍāla, on whose forehead white upright lines are made with clay, is of a pure soul. There is no doubt that he is venerable. There is no doubt that on the heads of those mean men who make the Ūrdhvapuṇḍra without a hollow, the foot of a dog is always (placed). O brāhmaṇa, having finished the rite spoken (i.e. laid down) for the morning, he should, according to his capacity,

1. Ūrdhvapuṇḍra—Upright lines made on the forehead with some colouring substance. It is one of the five saṁskāras that a devotee of Vāsudeva was supposed to undergo. The other four are: Tapa (branding on the arm and other limbs), Name (Names of Vāsudeva), Mantra (a hymn), Yāga (worship of the images of Vāsudevao).

worship Tulasī that destroys sins. Then, O brāhmaṇa, having, with his mind concentrated, listened to Viṣṇu's account from a Purāṇa, he who observes the vow, should devoutly and duly worship him. O brāhmaṇa, a man should always avoid (using) the seat of another person, avoid food of others, so also the bed of another person, and another man's wife; (he should) especially (avoid these) in Kārtika. He who observes the vow (of the Kārtika month), should always avoid a jujube, beans, meat and honey, royal beans etc. in Kārtika. O brāhmaṇa, (he should also avoid) the citron fruit, meat, flower and stale food. Masurika (a kind of pulse) is declared among the grains; the milk of cows is said to be vegetarian; O brāhmaṇa, salt is produced from earth; the limb of an animal is meat. O best brāhmaṇa, he should use all fluids bought by a brāhmaṇa, water remaining in a small lake, practice celibacy in the fourth period, and eat food from a dish made of rows of leaves. He should avoid besmearing his body with oil.

21b-35. He who observes the Kārtika-vow, should avoid mushrooms, lotus-stalks, asafoetida, onions, leave of (a kind of herb called) pūtikā, garlic, radish, potherb, so also a gourd, wood-apple, egg-plant, a pumpkin gourd, eating from (a vessel of) bell metal, (food) cooked twice, the food prepared by a lying-in woman, fish, bed and a woman in her period, food prepared by two women and the company of women. O brāhmaṇa, a householder should always avoid the dhātrī-fruit on a Sunday. On (eating) a pumpkin gourd a man would lose his wealth; on (eating) a bṛhatī he would not remember Viṣṇu; on (eating) a cucumber there would be no prosperity; on (eating) a radish there would be a loss of strength. One becomes defamed on (eating) bilva; he is born in the stock of an animal on eating nimba; on eating a palm-fruit there is the loss of the body; there would be folly on (eating) a coconut; a gourd is like the flesh of a cow; on eating kalindaka (the sin) would be (equal to that of) killing a cow. Kidney-beans are said to cause sin. The pūtikā-herb is declared to be causing the murder of a brāhmaṇa. On (eating) the egg-plant one's son would be lost; on (eating) beans one would be ill for a long time. On (eating) meat there would be a great sin (incurred); he should avoid (these) on the first day etc. (of the month). A man should give

that food, which he would avoid, to a brāhmaṇa, and have it in his meal at the end of the vow. As elephants flee away on seeing a lion, the messengers of Yama run away on seeing a man who duly observes the Kārtika-vow. O brāhmaṇa, the vow of (in honour of) Viṣṇu is the best; even a hundred sacrifices are not equal to it. By performing a sacrifice he would go to heaven, (while) one who observes the Kārtika-vow would go to Viṣṇu's world. O brāhmaṇa, whatever bad deed a man has done through mind, speech or act, perishes in a moment on seeing him who observes the Kārtika vow. Even the four-faced Brahmā would not be able to narrate the religious merit of him who observes the Kārtika-vow as (already) told, observing which, O brāhmaṇa, all the sin would go (away) through the fear of him who performs the Kārtika-vow (saying to itself): 'Where shall I go? Where shall I stay?' O brāhmaṇa, a man should give according to his capacity food, garments etc. (to brāhmaṇas), and should also feed brāhmaṇas to please Viṣṇu. The observers of the vow should keep awake at night by dancing, singing etc. The sin of him who devoutly listens to this, perishes.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The Greatness of Tulasī

Śaunaka said:

1. O you omniscient one, kindly tell me, for the good of all creatures, the greatness of Tulasī which destroys the sins of those who listen to it.

Sūta said:

2-13. The servants of Yama do not come to his house in the vicinity of which there is a grove of Tulasī, due to the house having the nature of a holy place, O brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, the Tulasī-grove is auspicious and removes all sins. Those excellent

men who plant it do not see the Sun's son (i.e. Yama). O best brāhmaṇa, all the sin of him who plants it, nourishes it, attends upon it, looks at it and touches it, perishes. O brāhmaṇa, those high-souled ones who worship Viṣṇu with tender Tulasī-leaves do not go to Yama's abode. The best rivers like Gaṅgā, the best (gods) Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva, along with deities and holy places like Puṣkara, remain in a Tulasī-leaf. A sinner who, endowed with Tulasī-leaves, casts his life, goes to Viṣṇu's abode. I have told (you) the truth. The man who, besmeared with the clay of Tulasī (i.e. in which Tulasī is growing), casts his life, goes, though full of hundreds of sins, to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, sin does not touch the body of the man who would wear the sandal-like Tulasī-wood. He goes to the highest position. He, who, though impure and of bad conduct, wears the rosary of (the beads made of) Tulasī-wood round his neck, goes, due to his devotion, to Viṣṇu's house. That man on whose body is seen the rosary made of Dhātrī-fruits or (beads of) Tulasī-wood, is a devotee of Viṣṇu. He again who, putting round his neck the garland (of the leaves) of Tulasī, would worship Viṣṇu, obtains, for each flower, a myriad of cows.

14-19. Those men who, of wicked minds, are sceptics, and who do not wear the (Tulasī)-garland, being burnt by the fire of the wrath of Viṣṇu, do not return from hell. A man should not abandon a garland of Tulasī-(leaves), especially of the fruits of Dhātrī, which destroys great sins and gives religious merit, worldly prosperity and sensual enjoyments. A man lives in Viṣṇu's house for as many thousands of years as the hair (on his body) the Dhātrī-garland would touch. That man who after having offered the rosary of (the beads of) Tulasī-wood to Viṣṇu, devoutly wears it, has no sin at all. On seeing the rosary made of the beads of Tulasī-wood, the messengers of the king of the dead (i.e. king Yama) run away as a leaf shaken up by the wind. O best brāhmaṇa, the dead ancestors of him who offers them piṇḍas in the shadow of Dhātrī in the Tulasī-grove, are emancipated.

20-25. O brāhmaṇa, he who keeps the Dhātrī-fruit in his hand, on his head, round his neck or in his ears should be known as Viṣṇu himself. O brāhmaṇa, the sin earned during crores of existences of him who would worship Viṣṇu with the

leaves and fruits of Dhātrī, at once perishes. O brāhmaṇa, sacrifices, gods, sages and holy places always remain by resorting to the Dhātrī-tree in Kārtika. A man who collects a leaf of Dhātrī or a leaf of Tulasī on the twelfth day in Kārtika, would not go to hell full of torment. O brāhmaṇa, the sin, due to the contact of food of the man who eats food under the shadow of Dhātrī in Kārtika perishes for a year. O brāhmaṇa, a man should worship Viṣṇu in a Tulasī-grove and at the root of a Dhātrī in Kārtika; he certainly goes to Viṣṇu's world.

26-27. O best brāhmaṇa, if a sinner devoutly holds on his head the water remaining at the root of Tulasī, he goes to Viṣṇu's abode. He who would hold on his head the water flowing from a Tulasī-leaf, has bathed (i.e. has obtained the fruit of having bathed) at all sacred places, and in the end he goes to Viṣṇu's house.

28-41. O great sage, formerly in the Dvāpara age there was an excellent brāhmaṇa. Once, having bathed and having offered a sacrifice to Tulasī, he went home. He became like the sun in lustre, and like Mārtaṇḍa in religious merit. A glutton, a great sinner, oppressed with thirst, came there, and having drunk the water at the root of Tulasī, had his sins perished. A hunter named Asimardana, came quickly, and said: "The food is eaten." Having eaten it and shattered the food in the cooking vessel has he gone? He killed him. Yama's servants, angry and with nooses and hammers in their hands came by Yama's order to take him to Yama's abode. (When) they thought of binding and taking him, Viṣṇu's servants came (there). Then having cut off the leather-straps, they quickly put him in a charming chariot. They (i.e. Yama's servants) politely asked them: "O good ones, due to which religious merit of him are you taking him (to Viṣṇu's abode?)" They said: "Formerly he was a king. He has done many (acts of) religious merit. He kidnapped some beautiful woman. Due to this sin, the king went to Yama's abode. There you tortured him by Yama's order. Lying there he sported with a woman of a coppery red colour. Due to this sin the king went to Yama's abode. By Yama's order you tortured him there. He remained there. He embraced misery and suffered for a long time. In Yama's abode

he was sprinkled with streams of salt water. Then for the remaining part of his stay in hell, he was repeatedly born in sinful stocks, and suffered unhappiness as a result of his own deeds. After drinking the water at the root of Tulasī he goes (i.e. would go) to Viṣṇu's abode." Hearing these words of them the messengers (of Yama) went as they had come. The messengers of Viṣṇu went with him to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you Tulasī's abode.

42. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you Tulasī's importance which destroys sins. I do not know what would happen to them who serve (Tulasī) with devotion, O sage.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

The Importance of Viṣṇupañcaka

Śaunaka said:

1. O Sūta, O sage, kindly tell me the importance of the remaining five days of Kārtika, which destroys sins.

Sūta said:

2-16. O Śaunaka, listen. I shall narrate (to you) the importance, which destroys sins, of the remaining five days of Kārtika. O best sage, of the five vows Viṣṇupañcaka (i.e. the vow observed for the remaining five days of Kārtika), is the best. He who, during that (period) worships Śrī Hari (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) with Rādhā, by means of sandal, flowers, incense, clothes and various kinds of fruits, goes, freed from all sins, to Viṣṇu's abode. Without doing the vow of Viṣṇupañcaka, a religious student, (or) a householder, (or) an anchorite, (or) an ascetic does not obtain the highest position. Viṣṇupañcaka removes all sins, is meritorious and well-known. He who would bathe during that (period), would obtain the fruit of (having bathed at) all holy places. He who, to propitiate Viṣṇu, devoutly offers a lamp full of ghee in front of (the image of) Viṣṇu, or near Tulasī, in

water, goes to Viṣṇu's abode. A sinner goes to Viṣṇu's abode. I have told the truth. A man should bathe with devotion (the image of) Viṣṇu with honey, milk, ghee etc. What would Viṣṇu being pleased not give to that good man? He should present excellent cooked food to the god of gods. (Even Brahmā) having four faces is not able to measure his religious merit. Being pure, he worships Viṣṇu on Ekādaśī day. Having secured cowdung he duly waits upon (the god) with the sacred hymns. He who observes the vow, should similarly again drink cow urine (reciting) the sacred hymns on the twelfth day. Similarly he should drink milk on the fourteenth day. Having got (these) for the purification of his sins, and having passed the four days, he should, on the fifth day, having bathed and duly worshipped Viṣṇu, devoutly feed brāhmaṇas and should give them presents. Then at night he should eat the mixture of the five products of a cow, which is well consecrated with sacred hymns. He who is unable to do this, should eat fruits, roots and food; O brāhmaṇa, he should offer an oblation according to the rite that is laid down. Lord Viṣṇu who is fit to be known, would himself honour him who would observe (the vow of) Pañcaka with Tulasī-leaves.

17-20. In olden days, in the Tretāyuga, there lived a śūdra, intent on leading the life of a villain, named Daṇḍakara, who always censured religious practices, who told lies, who hurt his friends, who had an ardent longing for anormous gestures of prostitutes, who snatched the wealth of brāhmaṇas, who was cruel, who was interested in another's wife, who killed those who sought his refuge, who kept the company of heretics, who ate cow's flesh, who drank liquor, who always defamed others, who was a traitor, who deprived his kinsmen of their means of livelihood, O brāhmaṇa. Observing him—the cruel one, intent on (committing) sins like that—the kinsmen, being angry, came to his house, O brāhmaṇa.

The kinsmen said:

21-26. O fool, O you of wicked conduct, you are destroying the glory in (i.e. of) our pure family, which was earned by (our) ancestors.

O brāhmaṇa, they who were thus angry, abandoned, out of respect for their family and through fear of bad name, that greatest (i.e. the worst) among sinners. Then, with all his glory lost, he went to a great forest. He would continuously practise the deeds of the villains along with them. O brāhmaṇa, when they were going along the path, they did not get anything to eat through fear. Being oppressed with hunger, they went to another place. Having entered (i.e. gone to) that place, seeing many excellent and meritorious brāhmaṇas who were seated at the root of a Dhātrī (tree) and who were the devotees of Viṣṇu, all the dasyus went (near him). That, Daṇḍakara also went near them, and saluted them.

Daṇḍakara said:

27. O best brāhmaṇas, I am oppressed with hunger. Surely my life will depart (now). Give me something to eat. I have sought your shelter.

28-33. Having heard his words, those (brāhmaṇas), who had a high regard for religious practices said: "How do you have a desire to eat (food) on the day of (i.e. sacred to) Viṣṇu, during the Viṣṇupañcaka, well-known as the remover of sins? Tell (us) your particulars. (Tell us) now what your name is." He joyfully said: "O brāhmaṇas, I am (a śūdra) by name Daṇḍakara. I am full of all sins. How can I be emancipated?" They said (to him): "Observe the best vow (called) Viṣṇupañcaka." O brāhmaṇa, by the order of the brāhmaṇas he observed the (vow of) Viṣṇupañcaka. After death, he got into an excellent chariot, and having reached Viṣṇu's place and his form, he remained (there) free from birth. The sin earned during a crore of existences of him who would devoutly listen to this account destroying sins, perishes at that moment (only).

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

In Praise of Giving Gifts

Śaunaka said:

1. O sage, O best among the learned, O you who know the essential nature (of things), tell me in order the importance of vows.

Sūta said:

2-6. O best sage, giving (a piece of) land is regarded as the best gift. He who made that gift (has given) a gift having the fruit of all gifts. O best brāhmaṇa, he who would give a gift of land with a crop (growing in it) to a brāhmaṇa, enjoys happiness in Viṣṇu's heaven as long as (the regimes of) fourteen Indras (last). Then, O king, he, having obtained a birth on the earth, (becomes) a sovereign emperor. Having enjoyed the earth for a long time, he would go to the abode of Viṣṇu. He who gives land of the measure of a cow's hide to a brāhmaṇa, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's abode. The sages described that land to be of the measure of a cow's hide (*gocarmamātra*) where a hundred cows and a bull remain uncontrolled.

7-10. He who receives the land and he who gives it, both go to heaven. Wise brāhmaṇas should abandon (i.e. refuse) hundreds of other gifts and accept (the present of) land. That ignorant brāhmaṇa who, being deluded, rejects (the gift) of land, becomes extremely miserable in every existence. To him who, having secured land from some other source, would give it to a brāhmaṇa, the lord of the world gives the highest position. He who destroys the land given to himself or to someone else, goes, along with a crore members of his family to a very fearful hell, O brāhmaṇa.

11-12. O brāhmaṇa, for him who would snatch the land of a deity or a brāhmaṇa, an expiation is not seen for hundreds of crores of kalpas. The religious merit of that king who protects the land given (by him) to someone else would be a crore times greater than that of people.

13-17. A man giving a cow would obtain that merit which is obtained by giving the earth consisting of seven islands, O

brāhmaṇa. He, who gives a bull to a member of a poor family, is freed from all sins, and goes to Śiva's world. He who gives gold of the measure of a sesamum to a brāhmaṇa, goes, along with a crore members of his family, to the abode of Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, he who would give silver to a good brāhmaṇa, obtains (i.e. goes to) the world of the Moon and he would always drink nectar there. O best brāhmaṇa, he who gives a coral, a pearl, a diamond or a gem (to a brāhmaṇa) goes to heaven.

18-25. A man would get a crore times more religious merit by giving a śālagrāma stone, than what he obtains by the gift of gold, jewels, or other valuable things equal to his own weight. The giver of a śālagrāma stone gets that religious merit which a man would get by giving the earth consisting of seven islands along with mountains, groves and forests. O brāhmaṇa, he who would give a śālagrāma stone to a brāhmaṇa, has given the fourteen worlds (to a brāhmaṇa). O best brāhmaṇa, he who makes a gift of gold, jewels or other valuable things equal to his own weight (to a brāhmaṇa), is not again born in (i.e. from) the womb of a mother. O best brāhmaṇa, he who gives (in marriage) his daughter that is adorned (with ornaments to a brāhmaṇa), would go to Brahmā's abode. He is not reborn. For a man who sells his daughter, there is no escape from hell; and for one who gives his daughter (in marriage according to the proper rites) there is no coming (back to earth) from heaven. He, who gives sandals or an umbrella to a brāhmaṇa, goes to Indra's city after death, and would live (there) for four kalpas. O best brāhmaṇa, he who gives a divine garment to a good brāhmaṇa, puts on a divine garment and would live in heaven for a long time.

26-27. O brāhmaṇa, he who would give an old cow or an old garment or a young girl in her menses, would go to hell. O brāhmaṇa, a man should not see the face of him who sells his daughter. Having seen (i.e. if he sees) it unknowingly, he should look at the sun.

28-58. O best brāhmaṇa, a man who gives (the gift of) fruits would go to heaven. There he would enjoy for thousands of kalpas the fruit (of his gift) like nectar. O brāhmaṇa, the man who gives vegetables (to a brāhmaṇa) goes to Śiva's abode; and (there) enjoys, with gods, rice boiled in milk for a couple of kalpas. He who gives ghee, he who gives curd, he who gives

milk, he who gives butter milk, goes to Viṣṇu's abode (and there) he drinks nectar. The man who gives sandal, who gives flowers goes to the abode of gods. Decorated with sandal and flowers, he would remain (there) for thousands of yugas. He who gives the gift of a bed—the best gift—to a brāhmaṇa, goes to Brahmā's abode, and sleeps (there) on a bed for a long time. The giver of a seat or the giver of a lamp, being free from all sins, would remain, surrounded by a row of burning lamps, on a seat in heaven. A man who would give betel-leaf, happily enjoys the entire earth. He sleeps, being clasped to the bosom by a divine lady, and eats tāmbūla. The best man who makes the gift of knowledge—the best gift—would, after death, live near Viṣṇu for three hundred yugas. O best brāhmaṇa, having obtained there knowledge difficult to be obtained, he, O brāhmaṇa, obtains salvation through Viṣṇu's grace. That best brāhmaṇa who would teach a helpless, miserable brāhmaṇa, goes, free from rebirth, to Śrī Viṣṇu's abode. One who would devoutly and with faith give (the gift of) a book would obtain, for every letter, the merit due to the gift of a crore of tawny cows. One who gives honey, who gives jaggery, goes to the Ikṣu-sāgara. One who gives salt, goes to the world of Varuṇa. O best brāhmaṇa, of all the gifts, the gift of food or water is declared to be the best by all sages knowing the truth. O best brāhmaṇa, he who has given food or water on the earth, has given all (kinds of) gifts, O best among brāhmaṇas. O brāhmaṇa, one who gives food is declared to be the giver (i.e. the saver) of life. Therefore, the giver of food gets the fruit of all (kinds of) gifts. As is food, so is water. The two are said to be equal. O best brāhmaṇa, food would not be prepared without water. O best brāhmaṇa, the two i.e. hunger and thirst are declared to be equal. Therefore, even the wise have declared food and water to be the best. O brāhmaṇa, those best men who make the gift of food on the earth, are freed from all sins, and go to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa ascetic, as many (sins of) brāhmaṇa murders, as the kinds of food a man gives on the earth, perish. O Śaunaka, the sins of those that give food abandon their bodies and go to the bodies of those that receive it. Therefore the wise do not accept the food of the most sinful one. The fools that accept it through delusion, become sinful. O best brāhmaṇa, one should make water remain on the ground

(after it flows from the palm of the brāhmaṇa to whom a gift is given). He (who offers a gift) is freed from all sins, and would go to Viṣṇu's abode. O best brāhmaṇa, wealth should be accumulated with effort. A man should spend the accumulated wealth in giving gifts. Those who through miserliness tinkle (i.e. only preserve) their wealth, are extremely unhappy. O sage, in the end, leaving the wealth, they go (i.e. die) wealthless. Those men who by repeatedly giving (gifts) become poor, should not be regarded as poor. They are great lords in the human world. O best brāhmaṇa that which is given to a cruel, relative-less (brāhmaṇa) who does not have proper restraint, does not stand by (the giver) in the other world. One who, when he has wealth, does not (either) enjoy it or give it (to others) should be known as poor, and would leave a sigh (of grief) after death. Those who see the truth have declared that giving gifts is superior even to austerities. Therefore, O best brāhmaṇa, one should give gifts. That giver who gives gifts (to persons of other castes) excluding a brāhmaṇa, goes to a terrible hell, which is fearful to all beings. The giver who does not remember the gift and the recipient who does not ask for it, both remain in hell as long as the moon and the sun last. O best brāhmaṇa, those sins like a brāhmaṇa's murder perish due to giving gifts. Therefore, one should give gifts.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

The Importance of Uttering Viṣṇu's Name

Śaunaka said:

1-4a. That man who devoutly listens to the account of Viṣṇu, which is the abode of glory, which removes all harms, which destroys all sins, which wards off all evil planets, which gives proximity with Viṣṇu, which gives the fruit of the four goals of human life, goes to Viṣṇu's abode in the end. The importance of the utterance of (Viṣṇu's) names is said to be very wonderful; merely by uttering it a man would go to the highest

position. Therefore, O Sūta, now tell me the manner of the utterance of (Viṣṇu's) names.

Sūta said:

4b-6. O Śaunaka, listen, I shall tell you the dialogue (between Sanatkumāra and Nārada), which would accomplish salvation. I shall tell you what formerly Nārada asked (Sanat)kumāra. Having heard various kinds of prescribed courses of conduct and their (various) mixtures Nārada, having joined the palms of his hands, once asked Sanatkumāra, of a tranquil mind, who was seated on the bank of the Yamunā:

Śrī Nārada said:

7. O you dear to the lord, tell me how there would be the destruction of the obstacles of dharma about which you had told (me) formerly.

Śrī Sanatkumāra said:

8-13. Listen, O Nārada, dear to Viṣṇu, and knowing the way to reach Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu). (I shall tell you) that which you asked, viz. the cause of freedom from the world which is beyond the darkness (of ignorance). O brāhmaṇa, even all those mean men who are destitute of (i.e. who do notpractise) all (good) ways of behaviour, who are of a wicked mind, who are outcaste, who deceive the world, who are intent upon religious hypocrisy, pride, drinking liquor, and wickedness, who are sinful and cruel, who are interested in another man's wealth, wife or sons, become pure if they resort to the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu. The name (of Viṣṇu), sure (to succeed) here, protects those sinful men who transgress even him who causes divinity, who, the kind one, the great one, gives salvation to the immobile and the mobile. A man who has done all sins, is freed if he resorts to Viṣṇu. If a contemptible, wicked biped would commit sin against Viṣṇu, and by chance resorts to his name, he is emancipated due to the name. A man falls down due to his sin against (Viṣṇu's) name which is the friend of all.

Śrī Nārada said:

14. O best brāhmaṇa, which are those sins against the

name of the lord, which, when done, impede men's acts and take them to a low status?

Śrī Sanatkumāra said

15-20. The censure of the good causes a great sin against the name (of Viṣṇu). How does (i.e. would) it tolerate the censure of those on account of whom it has become famous? He indeed does ill to the name of Viṣṇu, who, in this world, would regard all (things) about the auspicious Śrī Viṣṇu, as different from his own mind. He who does not disrespect his preceptor, who does not censure sacred texts, who does not look upon Viṣṇu's name as (merely) glorificatory, who does not have a wicked idea about (i.e. to look upon) name (as) sinful, has purification by means of restraints. Indifference to religious vows, sacrifice (for others), offering oblations, all good actions is also a fault. Not having faith, turning away one's face, not listening to advice is also a sin against the auspicious name. He, the mean man, who, even after hearing the greatness of (Viṣṇu's) name, remains without love for it, and is only intent upon 'I', 'mine' etc. (i.e. is selfish), has committed sin against the name (of Viṣṇu). O Nārada, Śiva, with grace, told the sages and me the great name of the lord, bringing happiness. It should always be carefully preserved. They who even knowing (the importance of name), do not suddenly avoid the ten sins against the name, are like children, who being angry, afflict their mother. Being free from sins, always mutter the name (of Viṣṇu). O divine sage, due to name only you will accomplish everything and not by any other means.

Śrī Nārada said:

21. O Sanatkumāra, how is it that those who like rash acts, who are bereft of discrimination and detachment, who are intent upon themselves as they love their own bodies, arise from (amongst) us?

Śrī Sanatkumāra said:

22-29. When somehow a sin or a blemish takes place against the name, the man should always recite the name and seek its refuge only. Names alone remove the sin of those having (i.e. who have committed) the sin against the names (of Viṣṇu), since

they alone, employed (i.e. recited) without rest (i.e. continuously) bring wealth. It is the name (alone) which being the characteristic mark, when remembered or heard, either in a pure form or with incorrect syllables, would protect a man, when it is recited without interruption. This alone is the truth. If it is resorted to hypocritically or for greed born of love for body or wealth, it would not quickly produce the fruit here, O brāhmaṇa. O Nārada, this great secret, which removes all inauspiciousness, and keeps off sins, was formerly heard (by me) from Śiva. O Nārada, even those who are intent on committing sins, but who know the names of Viṣṇu, would be liberated merely by reciting them. The entire greatness of the name (of Viṣṇu) is sung (i.e. narrated) in the Purāṇas. Therefore, O you who respect (others), please listen to a Purāṇa. O brother, Śiva, Viṣṇu himself with his followers would be pleased with him who has faith in listening to Purāṇas day after day. The fruit of him who listens with faith is double the fruit that accrues by bathing at the holy place Puṣkara or at Prayāga or at the confluence (of a holy river) with the ocean.

30-37. Those who attentively recite the Purāṇas or listen to them, obtain for every letter the fruit of giving a tawny cow. A man who is sonless obtains a son; he who desires wealth obtains it; he who longs for knowledge gets it; he who desires salvation secures it. Those who listen to the Purāṇas, having destroyed the mass of their sins earned during crores of existences, go to Viṣṇu's abode. O sage, a man should devoutly worship the brāhmaṇa who reads a Purāṇa, with (the gift of) a cow, land, gold, garments, sandal, flowers etc. O ascetic, he should joyfully give (the brāhmaṇa) a pot made of bell-metal, a water-vessel, so also an ear-ring or a ring made of gold, so also a seat, flowers and garlands. He should not do (i.e. show) wickedness in (giving) wealth (to the brāhmaṇa), since, in that case the gift would be without its fruit. O brāhmaṇa, a man should read a Purāṇa for the accomplishment of all objects. He who would devoutly give gold, silver, garments, flowers and garlands, sandal or a book, would go to Viṣṇu's abode. O brāhmaṇa, Citragupta would respectfully write the names of those who would in this manner get the entire book (read).

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

The Importance of Keeping Promise

Śaunaka said :

1-2. O wise one, I desire to hear, (therefore) tell me fully what the religious merit there is in keeping a promise, and what the sin is in breaking it. O you ocean of compassion, (tell me) what would happen if one takes a false oath or a true one, and by one's offering one's right hand or favouring (someone).

Sūta said :

3-13. O best sage, listen, I am telling it from the beginning. You are the foremost among Viṣṇu's devotees and are engaged in the good of all people. O brāhmaṇa, the merit in (i.e. due to) keeping a promise is a crore times greater than the fruit which a man obtains by giving a hundred cows. There is no doubt that a fool by breaking his promise goes to a terrible hell and is roasted there for a hundred periods of Manu. Then due to his own deeds he obtains birth (i.e. is born) on the earth in the house of a poor person, and bereft of food and garments he is afflicted. One should take an oath truthfully in the vicinity of a deity, fire, or one's preceptor. Till that time the body is burnt; but the family of Viṣṇu is not lost (i.e. continues). O brāhmaṇa, what should I now say about a false oath? O brāhmaṇa, a man (lives) in hell for a hundred periods of Manu due to a false promise. O best sage, he who touches the flowers taken off after Viṣṇu's worship and takes a truthful oath (but does not keep it), is roasted, taking with him seven members (of his family), in hell for a long time. If by chance he gets a birth, then in every existence (he becomes) a leper. This would never happen due to truthful promise. What can be said about (what would happen) due to a false oath? The man who offer his right hand (to give a promise) and keeps it, would obtain Kṛṣṇa. I am telling the truth, (and) the truth (only). The dead ancestors of him who, having offered his hand (to make a promise), does not keep it, are tormented in hell; and undoubtedly the dead one (i.e. he, after death) goes to a terrible hell, and is emancipated by crores of men (of his family, i.e. after a very long time).

Śaunaka said :

14. O sage, tell me, I desire to listen respectfully (to the account of him) who obtained Kṛṣṇa by keeping the promise made by him with his right hand.

Sūta said :

15-18. Formerly in a city lived a śūdra named Vīravikrama. He ate much, was bulky, talked much and was very handsome. He was wealthy, he had sons, was polite, learned, and dear to all people. He always honoured brāhmaṇas and guests. O best brāhmaṇa, he was devoted to his father and always kept his promise. He kept his promise, protected his elders and waited upon Viṣṇu. Once a handsome, young, very intelligent cāṇḍāla, taking up the guise of a brāhmaṇa, came to his house deceptively (i.e. to deceive him).

The brāhmaṇa said :

19-23. O wise one, listen to my words. My auspicious wife is dead. What shall I do? Where shall I go? Kindly tell me today. What is the use of (other) gifts, (visits to) holy places, sacrifices or crores of vows for him who would marry (his daughter) to a brāhmaṇa?

Hearing these words, that Vīravikrama said to that brāhmaṇa: "O brāhmaṇa, listen to my words. I have a virgin daughter. If, O brāhmaṇa, you would desire, I shall give (her to you in marriage) according to the proper rite. Hold my right hand. I shall give her. (This shall) not (be) otherwise." Hearing there words of (i.e. uttered by) him, he held his hand; and the cāṇḍāla being pleased, said these words.

The brāhmaṇa said :

24. Making (i.e. fixing) an auspicious moment, give me your daughter endowed with auspicious (characteristics). The sacred texts have decided that delay would cause many hurdles.

Vīravikrama said :

25. O brāhmaṇa, I shall give you my daughter tomorrow.

This will not be otherwise. A man offering his right hand should not do (as) a mean man (would do).

Sūta said:

26-32. O brāhmaṇa, O sage, having called the brāhmaṇa (named) Kṛṣṇaśarman, his priest, he told him all (about) the agreement. "How do you give your daughter to a brāhmaṇa, (when) you desire to give her to a śūdra? Do not give her to an unknown person who does not belong to a good family." O ascetic, thus his relatives like his father etc. spoke to him. (They said): "O dear Vīravikrama, listen to our words. Men of our caste do not give their daughter(s) to a man whose family, country, race, so also wealth and character and age are not known." O best brāhmaṇa, he (i.e. Vīravikrama) said: "I have offered my right hand. Now I shall not at all be able to change (my words)." Speaking thus to them, he proceeded to offer his daughter to that brāhmaṇa. Seeing that all the kinsmen were very much amazed. O sage, hearing his truthful words, (Viṣṇu) holding a conch, a disc and a mace, mounted upon Garuḍa, suddenly came there.

The lord said:

33-34. Blessed is your family; blessed is your way of life; blessed are your mother and father; blessed is your truthful speech; blessed is your right hand; blessed is your deed; blessed is your existence. (A man like you) does not exist in the three worlds. With such a deed, O good man, you will emancipate your family.

Sūta said:

35-42 When Śrīkṛṣṇa was talking like this, an aeroplane made of gold, having attendants of Viṣṇu (in it), and Garuḍa-bannerded everywhere, came (there). The holder of a conch and a lotus (i.e. Viṣṇu) himself put all (the members of) his family with the cāṇḍāla and the priest into the chariot, O brāhmaṇa; and thus taking them all (with him) Viṣṇu went to his abode in Vaikuṇṭha. He remained there for a long time, enjoying rare pleasures. One who violates his words or his right hand (i.e. a promise), goes, to hell with his family. I speak the truth, the truth only. O brāh-

maṇa, his manes and deities should not accept the food and water of (i.e. offered by) him. O best brāhmaṇa, (king) Dharma leaves his house through fear and goes (elsewhere). The foolish man, who, giving (i.e. creating) hope, later disappoints (a person), would go taking along with him a crore of his own people (i.e. members of his family) to hell. (King) Dharma violates (i.e. destroys) his (prosperity) through a king, or fire or thieves, who violates (i.e. does not keep) his promise. He, having heard (i.e. who hears) this (khaṇḍa) subsequent to the Svarga (khaṇḍa), being liberated while alive in this world, would (after death) go to the excellent abode, named Kṛṣṇa, beyond heaven.

V PĀTĀLAKHAṆḌA

(Section on the Nether World)

CHAPTER ONE

Rāma Sees Nandigrāma from Puṣpaka

Salutation to Śrī Gaṇeśa. Salutation to the family-deity. Salutation to the lotus-like feet of the preceptor.

1. After having saluted Nārāyaṇa and Nara, the best man, (so also) goddess Sarasvatī and Vyāsa, a man should recite Jaya.

The sages said :

2. O you glorious one, we have heard from you the entire charming Svargakhaṇḍa. O you long-lived one, tell us now the account of Rāma.

Sūta said :

3. Once the excellent sage Vātsyāyana asked the lord of serpents, the prop of the earth (i.e. Śeṣa to tell him) this very virtuous tale.

Śrī Vātsyāyana said :

4-8. O Śeṣa, (I have heard) from you all stories like the creation and dissolution of the world. So also (you have told me about) the settled rule about the terrestrial world, the celestial sphere, and about the cycle of the luminaries, so also about the products like the principles e.g. Mahat, and separate primary substances. O sinless one, you also told me the accounts of many kings. There is the wonderful account of the kings born in the solar race. In it is the story of the deeds performed by Rāma, which destroys many great sins. From you I have heard in brief the account of the horse sacrifice of (i.e. performed by) that hero Rāma. Now I desire (to hear) it in detail, which being heard or

remembered, is said to destroy great sins to give the desired objects and to give joy to the heart of the devotee.

Śeṣa said :

9. O best brāhmaṇa, you whose mind longs like this for the honey of the two (lotus-like) feet of the hero in Raghu's family, are blessed.

10-15. All sages say that the company of the good is excellent. Since the story of Rāma would destroy sins, you have favoured me by reminding me of Rāma again. I am a mere (insignificant) gnat in the ocean of the story of Rāvaṇa's enemy (i.e. Rāma) whose feet are adorned with the lights of gems in the series of the crowns of gods and demons, being deluded by which even gods like Brahmā do not know them (properly)? Still, I shall tell you (the story) according to my capacity, (as) birds resorting to (i.e. depending upon) their own speed go (i.e. fly) into the very extensive sky. The story of Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) has the expanse of a hundred crore (verses). As men have minds, so do they speak. The chaste fame of Raghunātha will purify my mind as fire by its contact purifies gold.

Sūta said :

16-17. Thus speaking to the best sage, he with his eyes closed in meditation, perceived the auspicious, extraordinary account, through his intellect. With his voice indistinct, and his body horripilated due to great joy, be again told the spotless story of Daśaratha's son (i.e. Rāma).

Śeṣa said :

18-19. When (Rāvaṇa) the lord of Laṅkā who caused affliction to gods and demons, who snatched away the beauty of the moons in the form of the lotus-like faces of the host of the celestial nymphs, was killed, all gods—Indra and others—became happy. Being pleased they, bowing (before Rāma) like servants, praised him.

20-26. Having placed the righteous Bibhīṣaṇa (on the throne) in Laṅkā, Rāma resorted to (got into) the Puṣpaka (aeroplane)

with Sītā. He was at that time accompanied by Sugrīva, Hanūmat, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa. Bibhīṣaṇa too, pining away in separation, followed them with his ministers. He (i.e. Rāma) seeing Laṅkā with its ramparts and portals broken in many ways, (so also seeing) Aśokavana, the place of (the stay of) Sītā, (seeing the śiṁśapā trees having flowers and buds, crowded with the demonesses who were (now) dead through the fear of Hanūmat, fainted. Seeing all (that) in this way, Rāma, the best of the Raghus, hearing the loud sounds of the kettledrums of gods, pleasant to the ears, and being honoured by the dances of the celestial nymphs (i.e. by the celestial damsels with their dances) along with gods like Brahmā (who had got) into their own aeroplanes, showing Sītā on the way the holy places with hermitages, and the sages, their sons and their chaste wives, went to the city (of Ayodhyā).

27-29. Rāma showed her all the places where he, the intelligent one, had formerly stayed with Lakṣmaṇa. Thus showing her (all the places on the way) Rāma saw his own city (i.e. Ayodhyā), and also near it Nandigrāma where king Bharata, with many signs of the grief due to the separation from his brother (i.e. Rāma), lived doing righteous deeds.

30-36. He lay (i.e. lived) in a cave, he practised celibacy, had (grown) matted hair and (put on) bark garments. His body had become slim, he was afflicted with grief, and was repeatedly telling stories about Rāma. He did not eat even barley-food, did not again and again drink water. Looking at the rising sun, he used to say: "O you eye of the worlds, the lord of gods, remove my great sin. For my sake, even Rāmacandra, venerable to the world, went to the forest. Waited upon by Sītā of a delicate body, he went to the forest. Oh! that Jānakī, that Sītā, who was pained on finding a stalk in her bed of flowers, who, the chaste one, never received the heat of the sun, roams for my sake from forest to forest. That Sītā who was never seen even by hosts of kings with their eyes is indeed being seen by the mountaineers. Oh! that Sīta, who did not desire to eat even when fed with sweet food, today longs for wild fruits."

37-41· Thus this Bharata, the great king dear to Rāma, every morning, everyday says after waiting upon the sun. That king (i.e. Bharata) who was being spoken to by his ministers

who were wise, who knew the right course, who were well-versed in sacred texts, and who had the same sorrows and joys as he had (i.e. who shared his sorrows and joys) said to them: "O ministers, why do you speck to me who am luckless and a mean man? For me my elder brother Rāma has gone to the forest and is sinking. O good ministers, by again and again respectfully remembering the feet of Rāmacandra, I, the unfortunate one, am purifying the sins of my mother. Sumitrā who gave birth to a hero (like Lakṣmaṇa), and who is dear to her husband, is extremely blessed (as) her son (Lakṣmaṇa) is everyday waiting upon the feet of Rāma."

42. Rāma saw that village, remaining in which, Bharata, affectionate towards his brother, was lamenting loudly.

CHAPTER TWO

Rāma Meets Bharata

Śeṣa said:

1-2. Then Rāma, with his heart being distressed by the eagerness to see him, repeatedly remembered his brother Bharata who was the foremost among the righteous persons; and removing the darkness with the moon-like lustre of his teeth that became visible, he said to the powerful Hanūmat, the son of Wind:

3-9. "O hero Hanūmat, hear my words which are impelled by my long-standing separation from my brother, and which are faltering and confused. O hero born from the body of Wind, go to that (my) brother whose body is emaciated due to separation from me and which he sustains forcibly (i.e. against his will). He puts on a bark-garment, he wears matted hair; being affected by separation from me, he would not even eat fruits. For him the wife of another person is like his mother, and gold is like a clod. My brother who knows the right way, would look upon his subjects as his own sons. Quickly sprinkle him whose body is burning with the flames of the fire of grief due to separation from me, with the shower of the water of the message of my arrival. Tell

him that Rāma has come with Sītā, is accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa, and the lords of monkeys like Sugrīva and demons with Bibhīṣaṇa and that he is comfortably seated on a seat in the Puṣpaka (aeroplane), so that my younger brother quickly becomes happy due to my arrival."

10-13. Having heard these words of the intelligent Raghu-hero (i.e. Rāma), the obedient (Hanūmat) went to Nandigrāma, the abode of Bharata. Having gone to Nandigrāma, the intelligent one saw Bharata in the company of old ministers, afflicted with the separation from his brother (Rāma), and telling his old ministers the account of Rāmacandra; and full of the honey of the lotuses of his feet he saluted Bharata possessing the form of Dharma.

14-15. Seeing him who was fashioned with all portions of goodness only by the Creator, Bharata with the palms of his hands joined, quickly rose, and said: "Welcome to you; tell me about the safety of Rāma". The right hand of him who was speaking like this, throbbed. Grief went (away) from his heart, and his face was filled with tears of joy.

16-17. Seeing the king like that the lord of the monkeys spoke to him: "Know that Rāma, with Lakṣmaṇa, has reached the vicinity of the town." He, whose body was sprinkled over with the nectar of the message of Rāma's arrival, had flood of joy. I do not know whether he had a thousand faces.

18. He said (to Hanūmat): "I do not have what I could give to you. As long as I live, I am the servant of Rāma carrying out his order."

19-22. Vasiṣṭha too, taking the materials of worship, and the very much delighted old ministers, went to Rāma along the path shown by Hanūmat. From a distance (they) saw the delightful Rāma who had come there seated on a seat in the Puṣpaka (aeroplane) along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa. Rāma also saw Bharata walking (to him) and having matted hair and having put on bark-garment with a small piece of cloth worn round his privities. He also saw his ministers whose dresses were similar to that of his brother (Bharata) and who had matted hair, and whose forms were emaciated due to being afflicted by daily penance.

23-28. Seeing the king (i.e. Bharata) like that, Rāma too thought (to himself): 'Oh! this son of the intelligent Daśaratha,

the king of kings, having matted hair and dressed in bark-garments is coming on foot to me. I, even when I was in the forest, did not experience so much grief as this one had due to separation from me. Oh! see Bharata, my brother, my companion dearer (to me) than (my) life, having heard that I have come in the vicinity, comes, accompanied by his old, very much delighted ministers and Vasiṣṭha, to see me.' The king (i.e. Rāma) honoured by Bibhīṣaṇa, Hanūmat and Lakṣmaṇa, and with his mind afflicted due to separation (from Bharata), and again and again saying, 'O (my) brother, O my brother', quickly got down from the (aerial) car, viz. the Puṣpaka (come down) from the wide firmament.

29-31. The intelligent Bharata, saw Rāma who was accompanied by gods, and who was afflicted due to his separation from his brother (i.e. Bharata himself), getting down from the (aerial) car. Shedding tears of joy, he saluted him like a staff (i.e. prostrated himself before Rāma). The chief of Raghus (i.e. Rāma) also, seeing him falling on the ground like a staff (i e. having prostrated himself), raised him, and full of joy and grief, held him by the arms (i.e embraced him). The hero, fond of seizing the lotus-like feet of Rāmacandra, and repeatedly weeping, did not get up, though strongly lifted (by Rāma).

Bharata said:

32-33. O great hero, O treasure of compassion, O Rāma, through kindness favour me who am of a bad conduct, who am wicked and sinful. O Rāma, just that foot (those feet) of yours which felt the touch of the hand(s) of Sītā to be harsh, wandered on my account in the forest.

34. Speaking like this, he, the dejected one, with his face full of tears again and again embraced (Rāma), and with the palms of his hands joined and his face full of joy stood before (Rāma).

35-36a. Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma), the abode of compassion, having embraced that younger brother (of him), having saluted the great principal ministers and having taken their leave, occupied with (his) brother Bharata a seat in the Puṣpaka.

36b-40. Bharata saw the praiseworthy Sītā, his brother's wife. He looked upon the daughter of Janaka, a chaste wife, like

Anasūyā, (the wife) of Atri, or like Lopāmudrā (the wife) of (Agastya) born from a pitcher, and saluted her. (He said to her): "O mother, forgive (me) the sin, which I, the ignorant one, committed. Ladies like you, devoted to their husbands, do good to all." The glorious Sītā also, respectfully looked at her brother-in-law, gave him blessings, and enquired after his health. All of them got into that aerial car in the wide firmament. In a moment (Rāma) saw his father's city (drawing) near.

CHAPTER THREE

Rāma Enters Ayodhyā

Śeṣa said:

1. Rāma, the intelligent hero, who, for a long time, desired to see the capital was delighted on seeing it where his own people lived.

2. Bharata too sent to the city his friend, minister Sumukha, to prepare the city for the festivity.

Bharata said:

3-12. The people should quickly celebrate the festival of Rāma's arrival. They should have gay pictures drawn in every house. The royal roads should be free from dust. They should be sprinkled over with liquid sandal. They should be furnished with abundant flowers. They should be crowded with delighted and rich people. All the big courtyards should be adorned with flags of various colours and painted. The fronts of the ridges of the thatched roofs should appear like the bow at the time of the arrival of the clouds (i.e. like the rainbow). The people should send forth agaru (sandal), seeing the smoke of which peacocks would dance sportively. They should paint with the minerals from mountains my elephants resembling mountains and well-controlled by the drivers. The horses having the speed of mind and painted should also look beautiful, seeing whose speed the heavenly horse gives up his pride. Beautiful virgins in thousands adorned with all ornaments and mounted

on elephants, should scatter pearls. The married brāhmaṇa-women with vessels in their hands containing dūrvā (grass) and turmeric (powder) should wave lights before Rāma, the great king. May Kauśalyā who is afflicted by the information about the union with her son, and who very much longs for seeing him, be delighted. The delighted people should make such arrangements giving beauty to the city on the arrival of Rāma.

Śeṣa said:

13-21. Hearing these words from (i.e. uttered by) him, Sumukha who was best among the counsellors, went to the city to have in it triumphal arches erected for the festive occasion. That minister named Sumukha, having gone to the city (viz. Ayodhyā), informed the people of the great festival (to be celebrated) on the arrival of Rāma. The people who had formerly given up their enjoyments and pleasures due to separation from him, were (now) very much delighted on hearing that Rāma had come (back) to the city. Pure brāhmaṇas, rich in (the knowledge of) the Vedas, with darbhas in their hands, and covered with bright upper garments, went to the lord of the Raghus. So also many excellent kṣatriyas who were the bravest, who had held bows and arrows, who were brave in battles went to him. Similarly vaiśyas who were wealthy, whose hands were adorned with signet-rings, who had put on white garments went to the lord of men (i.e. Rāma). Śūdras who were devoted to brāhmaṇas, who practised their own course of conduct, who followed the code of conduct (as laid down) in the Vedas also went to the lord of the city. So also people who followed (various) vocations, and who were attached to their own duties went, taking their own things (i.e. presents), to king Śrī Rāma. Thus, people full of flood of delight, and (taking) with (them) many wonderful objects, approached by the order of the king (Bharata) the lord of men (i.e. Rāma).

Śeṣa said:

22-30. Raghunātha also, surrounded by all deities seated in their own cars, entered the city in which attractive objects were arranged. The monkeys, leaping and going along the aerial path, and with their bodies beautified followed (the king) to the

best city. Rāma accompanied by Sītā and surrounded by his attendants quickly got down from the Puṣpaka, and got into a vehicle drawn by men. Then he entered Ayodhyā, in which triumphal archs were erected for the festive occasion, which was crowded with joyful and rich people, and which was fully adorned with gay objects. He looked very much pleased with the musical instruments like lutes (being played upon) and kettle-drums and other musical instruments being played upon and was praised by Sūtas, Māgadhas and other bards. Hearing the auspicious words, "Victory to Rāghava, to Rāma; victory to the ornament of the solar race; victory to the son of Daśaratha; may the lord of the world be victorious" uttered by the citizens who were delighted, and who looked graceful on account of horripilation produced on seeing Rāma, he entered (i.e. went to) the excellent path which was adorned with places where many roads meet, which was sprinkled over with sandal (mixed with) water, and which was furnished with flowers and leaves. At that time certain women in the city, desiring to see the form of Raghunātha, (and therefore) resorting to the holes of the latticed windows said (these words):

The women of the city said:

31-34. Oh! the bhilla-girls who in the forests drank with their lotus-like eyes the lotus-like face of Rāma, were lucky. They are very prosperous due to their good luck. See the blessed lotus-like face of Rāma having lotus-like eyes. See the blessed face, having lotus-like eyes, of Śrī Rāmadeva, the abode of bravery, which (face) gods like the Creator also saw. Oh! we are (indeed) very lucky. She this face which has a charming smile, which shines with a crown, which is extremely charming, which possesses lips the beauty of which has surpassed that of the bandhūka (flower), and which has a high nose.

Thus spoke those women, observing him with glances resembling lotus-petals. The lord of all, of a weak body, but delighted, entered his mother's house, which had great love (in store for him).

CHAPTER FOUR

Rāma's Consecration

Vātsyāyana said:

1-5. O great lord of the serpents, O lord capable of sustaining the burden of the earth, listen to one doubt of mine; and please explain (i.e. remove) it. Since the departure of Rāma to the forest she (Kauśalyā) lives with body but with a vacant mind. She is afflicted by separation from him; her body is emaciated; she is extremely unhappy. How indeed was she happy when she heard from Sumukha, the minister, that Rāma had come (back)? What happened (to her)? What were the marks (of her feelings)? What did she say to him who had brought the message of Rāmacandra? Remove this doubt of mine. Do me a favour and tell me who am listening, about the rich virtues of Raghunātha.

Śeṣa said:

6-7. Well asked, O you glorious one, O you who are in the forefront of best brāhmaṇas. Listen (now) attentively to it when I am actually telling it. She, having repeatedly drunk the nectar fallen from the lotus-like mouth of him (i.e. Sumukha), of (i.e. telling about) the arrival of Rāma, she became afflicted with her body becoming steady.

8-13a. She said: "Is it a dream of (i.e. seen by) me, a fool? Or do the words cause confusion? How can I, luckless that I am, see Rāma again? Due to having practised much penance I had obtained this my child—my son; but due to some sin of (i.e. committed by) me, he became separated from me. O good minister, is Rāma accompanied by Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa all right? Does he, moving in the forest, remember me, who am extremely pained?" Thus, she, who remembered Rāma, loudly wept. She fainted, and was not conscious of what belonged to her and what to others. Sumukha too, seeing (Rāma's) mother extremely unhappy fanned her with the ends of garments, and then she regained consciousness. Then he repeatedly spoke gentle and delightful words to the mother (of Rāma). He again made her happy by reminding her of the arrival of Raghunātha:

13b-19a. "O mother, know that Raghunātha with Lakṣmaṇa has come home. See Rāma with Sītā, and sprinkle them over with (i.e. give them) blessings." I do not know (i.e. I have not seen) such joy which she experienced on hearing the true words uttered by Sumukha. With her hair standing on end, she got up and reached (i.e. went to) the courtyard. With her body perturbed by joy, and shedding tears, she looked for Rāma. Just then Rāma, the lord of kings, and of a good conduct, and seated in a vehicle drawn by men, reached first the house of his mother Kaikeyī. Kaikeyī too, bent due to the burden of the sense of shame, did not say anything to Rāma standing in front of her. She was very much worried. Rāma, the banner of the solar dynasty, seeing his mother who was ashamed, said, consoling (i.e. to console) her, (these words) mixed with (i.e. full of) politeness:

Śrī Rāma said:

19b-21a. O mother, having gone to the forest, I did everything (as I was ordered to do). O mother, what should I do now by your order? I have done nothing despicable. Then, how (is it that) you are not looking at me? Greeting this Bharata and me with blessings, look at me.

21b-24a. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, O sinless one, she, with her face hung down, slowly said: "Rāma, go to your (own) house." And Rāma, the best among men, having heard (these) words of his mother, saluted her, and the treasure of compassion went to the house of Sumitrā. The large-hearted Sumitrā, seeing Rāma with her son (Lakṣmaṇa), said, with (i.e. giving him) blessings: "Live long, live long."

24b-28. Rāmabhadra too having saluted the feet of his mother, and having, full of joy, embraced her, again said (these) words to her: "O you conceiving a gem (like Lakṣmaṇa), no (other) brother of me has removed my grief as this intelligent one (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa) has done. Sītā who was kidnapped by Rāvaṇa, was got back by me—O mother, know all that to be the working of Lakṣmaṇa." Accepting with his head (i.e. by bowing down his head), the blessing given by Sumitrā, the wise one surrounded by the wise went to the house of his mother (i.e. Kauśalyā).

29-33. Hari (i.e. Rāma) seeing his mother delighted and longing to see him, quickly got down from the vehicle and seized her feet. His mother, eager to see him and with her mind confused, repeatedly embraced Rāma and was delighted. Horripilation due to joy appeared on her body and she faltered while speaking. Hot tears of joy trickled down up to her feet. Polite Rāma, seeing his mother bereft of the two large ear-rings and having her body without ornaments (worn) on the hands and feet and delighted to a certain degree on seeing him, having an emaciated frame, and experiencing grief, thought that it was not the time for grief and said to her:

Śrī Rāma said:

34-39. O mother, I have not waited upon your feet for a long time. So forgive me who am unlucky for my fault. Those sons who are not eager to serve their mother and father should be looked upon as great insects born from semen, O mother. What should I do? I went to the Daṇḍaka forest by the order of my father. There too, due to your favourable glance, I crossed the ocean of grief. Rāvaṇa kidnapped Sītā, and took her to Laṅkā. By your favour I got her (back) after killing that lord of demons. This is Sītā my devoted wife who has fallen at your feet. Show regard for her who is timid, and who has set her heart on your feet.

Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, she greeted her daughter-in-law who had fallen at her feet, with blessings and said to that devoted wife (of Rāma). (Kauśalyā said):

40-44. "O beautiful lady, O Sītā, enjoy for a long time with your husband. Give birth to two sons. O you purifying one, purify your own family. Women like you, who are devoted to their husbands, and who experience pleasure and pain with their husbands, become unhappy. There is no truth in the three worlds. O daughter of Videha (i.e. Janaka), you who followed the couple of the lotus-like feet of Rāma to the great forest, have purified your family. What wonder is there that those men in whose house there are chaste wives desiring what is dear to their husbands, are like a hurricane to crores of enemies?" Say-

ing so to Rāma's wife of curved eyes she remained quiet, with her hair standing on end due to great joy.

45-48. Then Rāmacandra's brother Bharata gave (back) to the intelligent Rāma, the great kingdom given to him by their father. The delighted ministers, invited astrologers, knowing sacred hymns, and, with great respect, asked them about an auspicious time; and being eager they consecrated Rāma on the great kingdom on an auspicious time on a good day united with an auspicious constellation. The great king, the lord of kings, stood on a beautiful (piece of) tiger-hide, after drawing on it (the picture of) the earth with its seven islands.

49-54. From that day only the hearts of the good men became joyful; the hearts of the wicked, tormenting others, became weary. Women due to their devotion to their husbands, were greatly attached to them. O sage, men did not even mentally commit any sin. Demons, gods, so also serpents, yakṣas, asuras, and great snakes remained on the right path. All they held Rāma's order with their heads (i.e. respectfully obeyed Rāma's order). People engaged in obliging others. They were happy as they followed their own course of conduct laid down for their caste. Auspicious moments of days and nights were passed in (getting) knowledge and diversions. Even great wind did not carry away even the small garments of those who remained on the roads. There was (absolutely) no talk about thieves. The kind Rāma, treasure of compassion, gave wealth to suppliants. With his brothers he always praised the preceptors and deities.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Coming of Sage Agasti

Śeṣa said:

1. Then the gods, with their minds delighted due to (Rāma's) killing the lord of demons called Rāvaṇa, humbly praised Rāma, consecrated (as the king).

Gods said:

2-10. Victory to you, O son of Daśaratha, O you who remove the sufferings of gods; victory to you who burnt the race of the demons; victory to you, O god, destroying the enemy whose hands were engaged in seizing the bevies of excellent women. The eager poets describe your destroying the lord of demons. O lord of the worlds, at the time of the deluge you again easily swallow the group of the worlds. Victory to you who are free from the causes of birth, old age etc. O mighty one, emancipate (us). Victory to you who have taken birth in the ocean of the family of the righteous, O you ageless, immortal and the fixed one. By means of (reciting) the names of you, the greatest god, even those who have committed great sins are purified. What then if good, foremost brāhmaṇas have obtained the human existence with a good body? The pair of your feet, praised by Śiva and Brahmā gives abundant things that are desired. We mentally desire it which is well arranged in the heart with the marks like those of pure barley (grains) etc. O you having the loveliness that excels Madana's frame, if you do not grant fearlessness to the world, then how can, O you compassionate and purifying one, the hosts of gods be happy? You take birth on the earth whenever the demons trouble us, O lord, though you are unborn and immutable, though you are the greatest lord. You who are the self-adorned one and you who are praised by those who approve of virtues, quickly enter (i.e. go back to) your own place, after having filled the earth with your superhuman good deeds like nectar to the dead and destroying sins. May the beginningless one, the foremost one, who takes the form of a god, who has put on a necklace and a crown, who looks like Cupid, who has forcibly killed his enemies, whose lotus-like feet are served by Cupid's enemy (i.e. Śiva), be victorious.

11. Speaking like this, all the gods led by Brahmā and Indra and pleased with the destruction of (their) enemy, repeatedly saluted the chief of the Raghus (i.e. Rāma).

12. Being extremely pleased by the praise, the very glorious lord of the Raghus, seeing the gods with their necks bent down, said to them:

Śrī Rāma said:

13. O gods, choose from me some boon which is extremely difficult to obtain and which some eager god, demon or yakṣa has not obtained.

Gods said:

14-16a. O lord, from you we have obtained the best thing, since you have killed our enemy, viz. Rāvaṇa. Whenever a demon troubles us, you should in this way destroy (that) enemy.

Saying, 'All right', the hero Raghunandana (i.e. Rāma), spoke again.

Śrī Rāma said:

16b-20. O gods, carefully listen to my words. The man, who again and again recites in the morning and at night the wonderful hymn of me (i.e. in my honour) composed by you and couched with my virtues will never meet with an extremely terrible defeat from his enemy. He will not experience poverty and will not suffer from a disease or a defeat. By reciting (the hymn) devotion to the pair of my feet will be produced in the joyful hearts of men.

Speaking thus, the crest-jewel of kings (i.e. the best king) remained silent. All the gods who were delighted went to their respective worlds.

21-27. Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) also looked after his wise brothers like their father, and the lord of the world fondled the subjects like his own sons. When he was ruling, the people did not meet with an untimely death; in the houses there was no great discomfiture like a disease. The calamity of the season was not seen, so also there was no fear from enemies. The trees always bore fruits, and the earth yielded much grain. The life of people was blessed with sons, grandsons and attendants. Their depression was removed due to their wives' company. They were everyday eager to listen to the stories about the lotus-like feet of Rāma. They never employed their words in censuring others. Even artisans, apprehensive of a blow from the

hands of Rāma, never even mentally committed a sin. People, with their eyes becoming steady on seeing the face of Sītā's husband, were always full of compassion.

28-45. He (had) the kingdom to which there was no rival, which was prosperous and had (in it) powerful elephants (or horses). It was charming on account of delighted and thriving sages and with ornaments of gold. It was well-nourished by those who always did the pious things like performing sacrifices and digging wells and doing other acts of charity. It was always rich with crops, had good wealth and fields. Its regions were good; subjects were good; it was self-abiding; it had ample grass, and a large wealth of cows. It was all around adorned by rows of temples. In it were villages adorned with ample wealth and prosperity. The lands in it shone with artificial gardens having good flowers, with trees having very sweet fruits, and with lakes having good lotus-plants. In the country only the rivers were *sadambha* (i.e. containing good water); the people were not *sadambha* (i.e. were not proud). There were families of many castes, well-born but not poor. In it *vibhrama* (i.e. amorous movement) was (seen) in women, but *vibhrama* (i.e. an error) was never seen in (i.e. committed by) the learned. Only the rivers flowed in a crooked way (*kuṭilagāminyaḥ*) but the subjects were not wayward in sex. The nights (only) were dark in the dark fortnights; but men were not full of darkness (i.e. ignorance). Only women had *rajas* (i.e. menses), (but) people did not behave unrighteously. A man was neither *andha* (i.e. blind) due to wealth nor without rice (*āndhya*) in (i.e. while taking) his meal. Only a chariot took a wrong course and never a royal official. *Daṇḍa* (i.e. a handle) was to be seen in (i.e. attached to) an axe, a spade, a row of fans or an umbrella; but *daṇḍa* (i.e. punishment) was rarely due to a fault or disturbance. Except among the groups of those who played at dice, there was no repentence. Only the gamblers were seen with dice (*pāśa*) in their hands (and none else with nooses—*pāśa* in his hands). *Jāḍya* (i.e. frigidity) was seen in water only. The waists of women alone were weak. Only women were hard-hearted, and not men. There was the *kuṣṭha* (herb) only among medicines; but no *kuṣṭha* (i.e. leprosy) among men. A hole was seen in good gems; a pointed weapon was (seen only) in the hand of a

man fashioning images. Tremor was due (only) to good feelings, never due to the fear of someone. Fever was due to sexual passion; there was poverty (i.e. scarcity) of the wicked (only). There was no want of a thing for a lucky person due to his good deeds. Only elephants were wanton in a war, and waves in a lake. Loss of *dāna* (i.e. 1. ichor 2. gift) was (seen) only in the elephants. Only thorns were sharp. Going away from the *guṇa* (1. string 2. virtue) was (seen) only in arrows; a compact utterance with a peculiar arrangement of words was (seen) only in a book. Abandoning friendship was present only in the wicked, and not among the kinsmen. Fondling the loved subjects he looked after that country. Like Yama to a wicked person he established righteousness in the country. When the lord was thus righteously protecting the country—the earth, a thousand and eleven years passed.

46-50. He who perpetuated the Raghu-family, on hearing (words) of dishonour about Sītā, and his own censure from a mean washerman abandoned her. By one order of him, the king who was protecting the earth righteously, Sītā who was (up to that time) well-protected, was abandoned. When once the highly intelligent one was seated in his assembly, the great sage, the best sage born from a pitcher (i.e. sage Agasti) came (there). Taking a respectful offering he got up; and the great king accompanied by Vasiṣṭha and people, honoured him who had dried the ocean and who had arrived there with a welcome, and enquired after his health. Then the descendant of Raghu (i.e. Rāma) spoke to the sage who had seated comfortably and who had taken rest.

CHAPTER SIX

Agastya Begins Rāvaṇa's Story

Śeṣa said:

1. The intelligent Rāma, the lord of all worlds, thus said to the sage, the treasure of celibacy and penance and pleased with the welcome:

2-6. "O you illustrious one, O you born of a pitcher, O you treasure of penance, welcome to you. All of us, with the members of our family are purified (by your arrival). I hope, your respect for the Vedas and sacred texts continues. On the globe there is none that would obstruct your penance. O glorious one, Lopāmudrā is your virtuous wife due to whose conduct as a devoted wife everything becomes auspicious. O you best sage, O you glorious one, O you piety embodied, O you treasure of compassion, tell me what thing should I do for you who are greedless. Everything takes place due to your penance, and you can have many things through your own penance, and you can have many things through your own desire. Yet, O best sage, just favour me, and tell me (what I can do for you)".

Śeṣa said:

7. Thus addressed by the intelligent Rāma, the lord of people, the king of kings, he spoke to Rāma, the lord of the world with more polite words.

Agastya said:

8-10. O lord, O king of kings, O treasure of compassion, know that thinking that to see you is extremely difficult, I have come here. You killed the demon named Rāvaṇa who troubled the world. Luckily gods are happy today; luckily Bibhīṣaṇa has become the king. O Rāma, today on seeing you indeed my sin has gone (away). O best god, the vessel of my mind is full of joy.

11. Speaking thus, (Agastya) born from a pitcher, with his mind perturbed due to joy on seeing Rāma, quickly became quiet.

12-15. Rāma again asked that sage well-versed in knowledge: "You know everything everywhere about the past, present and future in the world. O sage, tell it all in great detail to me who am asking you. Who was that Rāvaṇa, who troubled the gods and whom I killed. What is that Kumbhakarṇa? What is his species? O great sage, is he a god, or a demon, or a friend, or a goblin? O you omniscient one, tell me all that. You know all that in detail. Therefore, favouring me, tell me all that."

16-29. Hearing these words from him, that treasure of penance (viz. Agastya), born from a pitcher, began telling all that

was asked by the king (Rāma) of the Raghu (family). "O king, Brahmā brought forth the creation. His son was Pulastya. From him was born Viśravas, conversant with the Vedic lore. He had two wives, who were of a chaste conduct. The name of one was Mandākinī, and the other one was known as Kaikasī. From the former (i.e. Mandākinī) Kubera, enjoyer of the pleasures of a regent of the quarters, was born; through Śiva's favour, he took his residence in Laṅkā. Three great sons were born to (Kaikasī) the daughter of Vidyunmālī: Rāvaṇa, Kumbhakarṇa, and the righteous Bibhīṣaṇa. O very intelligent one, due to being born from the womb of a demoness and due to being born at the evening time, the mind of the two was steeped in unrighteousness. Endowed with brilliance, he (i.e. Kubera), once, having got into the Puṣpaka aeroplane made of gold and having (i.e. adorned by) groups of small bells, and being praised by his attendants having many jewelled ornaments, went to see his parents. The son (i.e. Kubera), having come to his parents, and having for a long time fallen at their feet and being beside himself with joy and with his hair standing on end due to horripilation, said: "Today is a good day for me. There is the rise of the fruit of my great luck, since I saw your feet, seeing which gives great religious merit." Having praised them with such words of praise, he went to his own house. The parents also became delighted due to the son's affection (for them). Seeing him (i.e. Kubera), the intelligent Rāvaṇa, said to his mother: "Who is this man who having fallen upon my father's feet, has again gone (back)? Is he a god, or a yakṣa or an excellent man? He is the treasure of great luck. He is surrounded by his own attendants. Due to which penance has he obtained this aeroplane, which has the speed of the wind, and which is the best place of enjoyment having in it gardens and groves for sports etc.?"

Śeṣa said :

30-36. Hearing these words, his mother, displeased and overcome with anger, and with a slight change in her eyes said to her son: "O son, listen to my words full of great instruction. His birth, deeds etc. are superior due to his (good) thoughts and cleverness. He has taken birth (i.e. is born) from the womb of my co-wife, (and) has brightened the pure, great family of his

mother; but you, who are born from my womb, are an insect, are a sinner, and fill your own belly (only). Like a donkey who does not know (i.e. has no idea about) the load (on his back) nor its quality, you appear to be learned but enjoy lying and sitting; your existence is like one that is asleep, gone away, or fallen. By means of his penance he who pleased Śiva, has obtained residence in heaven, an aeroplane having the speed of the mind, and royal glory. His mother is very blessed, very lucky and very prosperous, whose son has obtained the position of the great due to his merits."

37. Having heard these words angrily uttered by his unhappy mother, the most wicked one (Rāvaṇa), entertaining anger for himself and determined to (practise) penance, again said (these) words.

Rāvaṇa said :

38-43. O mother, listen to my words full of pride. You, who have three sons like us, are one who conceive gems. Who is that insect of that Kubera? What (i.e. how insignificant) is his small penance? What (i.e. how insignificant) is Laṅkā? What (i.e. how insignificant) is his kingdom having (but) a few servants? O mother, full of compassion, listen to my pledge taken through determination, and never taken (before) by any one, O very lucky Kaikasī. If by practising difficult austerities pleasing Brahmā, and by always giving up food, water, sleep and sport, I do not bring under my control the entire world, then I would incur the sin due to harming the world of the manes.

Accompanied by Bibhīṣaṇa, Kumbhakarṇa too took the pledge with Rāvaṇa and saying the same went to a mountain-grove.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Elimination of Rāvaṇa by Viṣṇu

Agastya said :

1-6. Then the demon practised a severe penance for ten thousand years. Looking at the sun with his eyes, he remained with his feet upwards. Kumbhakarṇa also practised a very difficult penance. The righteous Bibhīṣaṇa also practised penance. Then the lord, the god of gods, the lord of beings, served by the crowns of the gods, demons, yakṣas and others, was pleased, and gave him a great kingdom, shining in the three worlds; he also made his body charming and waited upon by gods and demons. Then he always tormented Kubera having a religious mind. He took away his aeroplane, and forcibly (captured) the city of Laṅkā. He tormented the entire world; the gods also went to heaven. He killed brāhmaṇa families, and cut off the roots of the sages.

7-9. Then the gods who were grieved, came with Indra to Brahmā and the magnanimous ones prostrating themselves (before him) like staffs praised him. All the respectful gods praised (him) with proper words. Then, the lord, who was pleased, said: "What should I do?" Then in front of Brahmā the gods narrated the trouble from Rāvaṇa and their own defeat.

10-15. Thinking for a moment, Brahmā went to Kailāsa with the gods. The gods led by Indra and full of surprise remained by the side of that mountain and praised Śiva. (They said:) "Salutation to Bhava; salutation to you—Śarva; salutation to you-Nīlagrīva; salutation you—the gross, the subtle, and the multiformed one." Śiva, having heard the words uttered from the mouths of the gods, said to Nandin: "Bring the gods near me." In the mean while, gods invited by Nandin, entered the city and looked with wonder-struck eyes. Brahmā came forward and saw Śiva who did good to the world, who was served by crores of delighted attendants who were naked, deformed, crooked, dusty and hideous.

16-17. Remaining in the front the grandsire along with the gods saluted and said to the highest lord of gods: "See the condition of the residents of heaven. Take pity, O great god, O you

who are affectionate to those who seek your refuge. You (now) exert yourself to kill the wicked demon."

18-20. He (i.e. Śiva) too hearing their words full of dejection and sorrow came with all gods to the place of Viṣṇu. Along with gods, serpents and kinnaras all the sages praised him: "O Mādhava, victory to you. O lord of gods, victory to you. O you, who remove the afflictions of your devotees, victory to you. Look (at us), O great god. Look at your servants." In this way all gods led by Śiva loudly spoke.

21-28. Hearing what was said (by gods) Viṣṇu, the great lord of gods, seeing the grief of gods spoke as if pacifying their grief in a voice loud like (the thundering of) clouds, to the gods: "O gods led by Brahmā, Śiva and Indra, you should listen to (my) words intent on your good. I know the fear caused to you by Rāvaṇa. Today, taking an incarnation I shall destroy that. The city of Ayodhyā, an ornament to the earth, is protected by kings born in the solar family and doing good acts like (making) great gifts and (performing) sacrifices. It shines with silver regions. Daśaratha, the mighty king, who conquered the whole world, who is endowed with wealth (but) who is childless, now rules over the kingdom (and lives) in it. He, endowed with great power performed with a desire to have a son the sacrifice according to the rite through revered Ṛṣyaśṛṅga solicited for (performing) the sacrifice. Then, O gods, he first prayed to me through penance. I was born in four ways having the names Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna on his three wives. I shall fully eliminate Rāvaṇa along with his army and horses (or elephants). You should also by your own portions taking the form of bears and monkeys move on the entire earth."

29-36. Thus speaking in the heaven, he quickly ceased to speak. All the gods, having heard these great words, and with their hearts pleased, did what was told by the intelligent god of gods. They, taking the forms of bears and monkeys filled the earth with their portions. O great king, you yourself are that great god Viṣṇu, who destroys the misery of gods, and who has taken up a (human) form. O highly intelligent one, this Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna are (born) from your portion. So also is Rāvaṇa who troubles the gods created. Due to the continuity of former enmity he kidnapped Sītā, O king. You killed that demon born

in the stock of a brāhmaṇa demon. You overthrew that lord of demons, the son of Pulastya, who troubled the entire world. The whole earth has become happy. Today the brāhmaṇas have secured happiness and the ascetics have secured the power of (their) penance. All the holy places have (again) become auspicious, and all the sacrifices are well-established. O soul of the universe, O origin of the world, O best man, when you are the king, the entire world with gods, demons and men has become happy.

37. I have, according to my intellect (i.e. intellectual capacity) today told you everything—the birth and death (of Rāvaṇa) —as asked by you, O innocent one.

38. Hearing in this way the account about the family of the lord of demons, the great man of well-known prowess, the lord, the ruler, checking his tears trickling on his lotus-like face, fell on the ground in his assembly.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Agastya Advises Rāma to Perform a Horse-Sacrifice

Śeṣa said:

1-4. O best sage Vātsyāyana, well-versed in the Vedas, the story of the god of gods, the only protector of all righteous ways, destroys sins. Seeing Rāma (fallen) unconscious, Agastya, the treasure of penance, immediately wiped his tears slowly with his hand, and said: "O Rāma, revive quickly, why do you sink? You are the ancient Viṣṇu, the destroyer of the demons' family. Without you the world—the past, present, future, the immovable and the movable—does not go on. (Then) why have you fallen unconscious here?"

5-6. Hearing the words uttered by him who was born from a pitcher (i.e. by Agastya), the great king (Rāma), with his lovely face full of tears trickling on it, got up, and with his frame bending due to sense of shame, and averse to doing wrong to a brāhmaṇa, said very piteous, distinct words in detail.

Śrī Rāma said:

7-15. Oh! see the ignorance of me who am a fool and wicked-minded, that I, very eager through passion, killed (Rāvaṇa) born in a brāhmaṇa-family. (Though) I had the true knowledge of the Vedas and (other) sacred texts, I, void of intelligence and of a bad mind killed a brāhmaṇa, (destroyed) a brāhmaṇa-family. A brāhmaṇa never got a reproach in (i.e. from a member of) the Ikṣvāku family. (But) I, doing such a deed (as killing a brāhmaṇa like Rāvaṇa) have greatly stained it. Those brāhmaṇas who deserve worship by means of presents, honours and food, have been killed by me with strokes of volleys of arrows. Which worlds shall I go to? Even the unbearable (hell called) Kumbhīpāka (will be secured by me). There is no such sacred place as is capable of purifying me. There is no sacrifice, no penance, no gift, or no vow etc. that would purify and emancipate me who have wronged a brāhmaṇa. Those men who have angered a brāhmaṇa-family, go to hell, and after having reached hell repeatedly experience misery. For those who have the true knowledge of the castes and the stages of life, Vedas are the roots of religious practices. The brāhmaṇa-family is the root of all the prominent branches of the Vedas. What world shall I who through insolence cut off that root, obtain (i.e. go to)? What should be done today by which good would take place in my case?

Śeṣa said :

16. Agastya said these words to the lord of kings, the best among the Raghus, who had taken a human form through his divine power and who was very much weeping.

Agastya said :

17-23. O very wise, very intelligent king, do not be dejected. No (sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa would be earned by you, desiring the destruction of the wicked. You are the ancient man; you are actually the lord beyond Prakṛti. You are the author (of the world); you take it away; you are its protector; you are actually qualityless (but) possess qualities due to your desire, since by (merely) uttering your name, all, viz. the drinker of spirituous liquor, the killer of a brāhmaṇa, one who steals gold and one

who commits a sin, are quickly purified. O you very intelligent one, this respectable lady Sītā is a great lore, merely by remembering whom those that become free (from the mundane existence) obtain beatitude. Rāvaṇa also was not a (real) demon. He was your servant in Vaikuṇṭha. O you killer of demons, he obtained demonhood due to the curse of sages. You have favoured that brāhmaṇa (viz. Rāvaṇa) and have not killed him. Thinking like this do not again grieve over (the death of Rāvaṇa).

Hearing these words from him, Rāma, the conqueror of his enemies' cities, spoke sweet words, uttering stammering sounds.

Śrī Rāma said :

24-26. Sin is said to be of two kinds, viz. deliberate and non-deliberate. Deliberate is that which is done with an intention. The non-deliberate is that committed unintentionally. The deliberate sin is exhausted only after experiencing (the fruit of that sinful) deed. The other one would perish through remorse. This is declared by the scriptural injunctions. The words of the good cannot be properly regarded as removing the grief of me who have intentionally committed the extremely censurable killing of a brāhmaṇa.

27-28. Tell me a vow, a gift, a sacrifice, a (visit to a) holy place, or some great worship like that, which would burn my sin, and by which my spotless fame will purify the people who are defiled by sinful conduct and whose lustre is taken away due to the killing of a brāhmaṇa.

Śeṣa said :

29-36. That treasure of penance (i.e. Agastya) spoke these words to Rāma whose feet were illumined by the gems on the heads of the gods and demons that saluted him and who had spoken thus: "O Rāma, O great hero, O you who does favour to the worlds, listen to words which I (shall now) speak for removing (the sin due to) killing a brāhmaṇa. He who would perform a horse sacrifice, overcomes all that sin. Therefore, O soul of the universe, you perform that auspicious horse-sacrifice. You who are wise, who are endowed with great glory, who are having great power, who are the lord of the earth should perform that horse-

sacrifice which removes the sin of (i.e. due to) killing a brāhmaṇa, and which was performed by the great king Dilīpa, your ancestor. Indra, the best among men, having performed a hundred sacrifices, secured, in Amarāvatī, a position well waited upon by gods and demons. All these your ancestors—Manu and king Sagara, and king Marutta, so also (Yayāti) the son of Nahuṣa, performed (this) sacrifice and went to the (highest) place. Therefore, O lord of kings, perform (that sacrifice); you are fully capable (of performing it). Your brothers, the regents of quarters, are appreciative of it."

37. Having heard what the sage said, that fortunate Rāma, the best of the Raghus, afraid of having killed a brāhmaṇa, very much deciding to perform it, and (with his glory) sung by those who were conversant with past events, asked (Agastya) about the manner (in which it was performed).

CHAPTER NINE

Instructions in Religious Practices

Śrī Rāma said:

1. What kind of horse should be (used) there (i.e. in that sacrifice)? What is the manner in which he is to be honoured? How can it be performed? Which enemies are to be conquered in (i.e. while performing) that sacrifice?

Agastya said:

2-11. A horse that is having the colour of the water of Gaṅgā, that is auspicious in body, that is dark in ears (i.e. that has dark ears), that is red in face (i.e. that has a red face), that is yellow in the tail (i.e. that has a yellow tail), that has good characteristics, that has the speed of the mind, that can move everywhere, that resembles Uccaiḥśravas, that has auspicious marks is said (to be used) in a horse-sacrifice. Having worshipped the horse on the full-moonday of

Vaiśākha, having written (and having put) a note marked with one's name and power on his forehead, one should let him loose, carefully guarded by guards. The powerful guards should go wherever the horse to be sacrificed goes. The guards should forcibly bring him back from him who, with force, binds him due to his own heroism and power. The sacrificer should remain (practising) and should observe celibacy. Till two years pass while the man is observing the vow, the poor, the blind, and the helpless should be satisfied by (giving) them wealth etc. O venerable (Rāma), abundant food should be given, and much wealth (also) should be given. The intelligent one gives whatever (a suppliant) asks for. O you destroyer of your enemies, the sacrifice of him who does acts like this, when completed, destroys all sins. Therefore, you are able to perform it, to protect it and to honour it. O king, having had auspicious fame, purify other people.

Śrī Rāma said:

12. O best brāhmaṇa, now see my stable; see whether there are horses like that (i.e. as described by you), having auspicious marks.

13-19. Hearing these words, Agastya, the mine of compassion, got up and desiring to see the auspicious horses fit for the sacrifice, went with Rāma to the stable and saw there very strong horses of lovely bodies, and having the speed of the mind. While seeing them he wondered to himself as to whether they were the descendants of the king of horses that had come (down) to the earth, or were solidified mass of the fame of Raghu kings, or whether it was a great mass of nectar (that had come out) of the ocean. On one side there was an excellent row of horses with crimson bodies. At one place there were horses with dark ears and shining like musk. At one place there were horses having a golden splendour. At other place there were horses of blue colour. At one place (there were horses) surrounded by particular spotted horses. Seeing all of them, the sage, with his mind full of eagerness went to another place to see the horses fit for the sacrifice. There he saw hundreds of them having that colour and tied

(within the stable). Seeing them, the sage, with his body delighted (i.e. having marks of delight), was amazed.

20-21. Seeing at one place horses with dark ears, with their bodies resembling milk, with yellow tails, red faces, having auspicious marks, fully spotless, resembling the streams of pure water, graced with the speed of the mind, bright like the heaps of spotless fame, the sage who dried the ocean and whose eyes and face were bright due to joy, spoke on seeing the beautiful horses to the lord of Sītā (i.e. spoke to Rāma).

Agastya said:

22-24. O best of the Raghus, the eyes of me who am seeing your many auspicious horses fit for the horse-sacrifice, are not today getting satisfaction. O illustrious Rāmacandra saluted by gods and demons, O great king, perform a big horse-sacrifice. O you prosperous one, performing all groups of sacrifices like (Indra) the lord of gods, drying like god Sun the ocean of your enemies, and having conquered the war in which the chief of the hosts of enemies is killed, make this earth full of pleasures and enjoyments.

25-30. He with all his senses fully delighted by the utterance of these words collected all excellent requisites for the (horse-) sacrifice. Accompanied by the sage, the great king came to the bank of Sarayū. There he ploughed a large (portion of) land with golden ploughs. Having plentifully scratched (i.e. ploughed) the land of the measure of four yojanas, the king constructed temporary halls for the sacrifice. He (got) prepared a basin with a womb and a girdle, decked with many gems and endowed with all charm. The best sage Vasiṣṭha, having a great penance (to his credit), got all that done according to the rules as laid down in the Vedic texts. That sage (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) sent (his) disciples to the hermitages of best sages. They (i.e. the disciples) told them that the best Raghu (i.e. Rāma) was ready (to perform a sacrifice).

31-35. Then all the sages, best among those who practised penance, were invited. They, being extremely eager to see the highest lord (i.e. Rāma) came (there). Nārada, (a sage) named Asita, Parvata, the sage Kapila, Jātūkarṇya, Aṅgiras, Vyāsa,

Ārṣṭiṣeṇa, Atri, Āsuri, Hārīta, Yājñavalkya, Saṁvarta, and (the sage) named Śuka—these and other sages went to (attend) the excellent horse-sacrifice of Rāma. The king (the descendant of) Raghu, of a magnanimous mind, honoured all of them by rising and saluting them and by making respectful offerings and offering seats to them. He whose valour was generally known, gave them cows and gold. (He said to them): "Today it is my great luck that I have seen you."

Śeṣa said:

36. O brāhmaṇa, when (the hall) was crowded on the arrival of excellent sages, there was discussion about the way of life well in conformity with the castes and the stages of life.

Vātsyāyana said:

37. What kind of discussion about the way of life took place there? What wonders (i.e. wonderful things) did they tell? What did the good (sages), through compassion for all people, say (there)?

Śeṣa said:

38. Rāma, the great son of Daśaratha, having seen the sages gathered there, asked them about all the ways of life proper for the castes and the stages of life.

39. They, on being asked by Rāma explained the very meritorious ways of life. I shall properly tell them to you. Listen to them.

The sages said:

40-47. A brāhmaṇa should always perform sacrifices, should engage in study etc. Having studied the Vedas and being free from passion he should not enter upon the householder's stage. A brāhmaṇa should always avoid serving low people. Even when he is in a calamity he should never live by following a dog's life. To approach his wife (i.e. to have intercourse with her) after the period of menstruation is the proper course for a brāhmaṇa; it is good for women. Or merely by remembering them he would desire a child. Approaching (their wives) by day by men is regarded as cutting short (the span of) life. An intelli-

gent man should avoid (intercourse on) a śrāddha-day and all the parvan days. If he would cohabit with his wife through infatuation on these days he falls from the highest (position). That householder who has intercourse with (only) his wife after the period of menstruation, and who is devoted to his wife (alone) should always be known as a celibate. The period of menstruation lasts for sixteen days. Out of them four are extremely censured. Out of them (intercourse on) the even days causes the birth of a son and (on) the odd ones causes the birth of a daughter. He, being pure, and avoiding inauspicious (period of the) moon, so also (the constellations like) Maghā and Mūla, should cohabit with his wife, especially on (a night when) a male constellation (is predominant). She would give birth to a pure son who would help accomplish the (four) goals of human life.

48-62. The (gift of a) couple of cows that is spoken of in the Ārṣa form of marriage[1] is good. Even a small dowry for a girl causes a sin to the purchaser of the girl. Trade, serving a king, not studying the Vedas, a bad (i.e. improper) marriage, omission of the essential ceremonies of the Hindu religion, are causes of the downfall of the family. A householder (obtains) merit by giving food, water, fruits, roots and by giving a cow (to a brāhmaṇa) according to the proper rite. He, from whose house a guest goes unhonoured and disappointed, loses the merit that he has collected since his birth. A householder should eat the residue of the food after having given it to his manes, the deities and human beings. He who cooks for himself and fills his own belly only, eats sin (only). Sin enters oil on the sixth and the eighth days of the month, (while) it always remains in flesh. He should avoid a razor (i.e. shaving) and (coitus with) his wife on the fourteenth day and the new-moon day. He should not enjoy his wife when she is in her menses, and should not eat with her. (Only) with one garment (on his body) he should not eat, nor should he eat (by sitting) on a high seat. An excellent man, desiring lustre, should not see his wife while she is eating. A man should not blow into fire by his mouth; he should not see (his) wife when she is naked. He should not heat

1. Ārṣa Vivāha; A form of marriage derived from the ṛṣis; one of the eight forms of marriage in whtch the father of the bride receives one or two pairs of cows from the bridegroom.

his foot in fire; he should not put an impure thing into fire. He should not harm beings; he should not eat at both the twilights. He should not see a cow giving a suck (to her calf); he should not point out the rainbow (to others) by day or at night; he should not eat the fresh butter that has come up from curd. He should not salute his religiously wedded wife. at night he should eat till he is fully satisfied (i.e. till his belly is full). He should not love (i.e. take interest in) the union of song, dance or instrumental music; he should wash his feet in (a vessel of) bell-metal. He should not wear a garment or shoes worn by another person. He should not eat from a broken pot; nor should he eat polluted food. He should not lie with wet feet; with his hands and mouth uncleaned after having eaten food he should not go anywhere. He should not eat while lying down; with his hands and mouth uncleaned after having eaten food, he should not touch his head. He should not praise a human being, nor should he condemn himself. He should not salute him who has risen (in life) nor should he talk about the defects of others. Having thus resorted to the householder's stage, he should go to (i.e. take to) the hermit's stage of life with his wife or when the wife is dead; and then he should detach himself (from the worldly existence).

63. The great Rāma, desiring the welfare of the world, listened to these and other practices narrated by the sages at that time.

CHAPTER TEN

Rāma Appoints Śatrughna as the Protector of the Horse

Śeṣa said:

1-2. While Rāma was thus listening to religious duties (from sages) the spring season in which beginning of very great rites is made, set in. Seeing that season (had set in), the intelligent Vasiṣṭha, born from the pitcher, said to the great king Rāma, what was proper.

Vasiṣṭha said:

3-8. O Rāmacandra of mighty arms, for you the time when the horse fully honoured is let loose for the sacrifice, has come. Make preparations for it. Invite the best brāhmaṇas. May the lord worship the brāhmaṇas properly. May he give gifts that have come up to his mind (i.e. desired by him) to the helpless, blind and the miserable according to the proper rite after having worshipped and honoured them. Initiated along with the golden (image of your) wife, sleeping on the ground, being restrained, and avoiding excellent enjoyments, keeping the deer's horn on the waist, wearing a girdle, deer-hide, and a staff, you should make preparations for the (horse-sacrifice) with (all) the (requir-ed) things.

Hearing these significant and apt words of Vasiṣṭha, the intelligent (Rāma) spoke to Lakṣmaṇa words rich with various meanings.

Śrī Rāma said:

9. O Lakṣmaṇa, listen to my words (instructions); and having listened to them, quickly carry them out. Carefully bring a horse proper for the rite of the horse-sacrifice.

Śeṣa said:

10. Having heard the words of the lord of Raghus, Lakṣ-maṇa, the conqueror of (his) enemies, said these words, descri-bing (the horse) variously, to the commander-in-chief of the army.

Lakṣmaṇa said:

11-15. O hero, listen to these very sweet words of (i.e. uttered by) me; and having heard them, quickly carry them out according to the order of Rāma whose feet are rubbed by the crowns decorating the heads of the kings. Keep ready the army whose divisions are active due to the strength of the strong wind (generated) by the destroyer (of the universe), and having good chariots, elephants, foot-soldiers and good horsemen. Keep ready horses whose speed is like that of the wind, and whose plantings of their feet (i.e. steps) are charming like the rows of

ripples, and which are mounted upon by good horsemen, holding many weapons and striking the enemy's army. Observe the elephants resembling mountains, which are (mounted upon) by the brave riders having darts and lances in their hands and having missiles, which exude profuse rut, which are intoxicated and are full of (i.e. have on them) all weapons and missiles. Let the groups of the charioteers take my chariots shining with extensive, large wealth, being yoked with horses having the speed of the wind, reminding (one) of the destruction of various foes, and with their topmost parts full with weapons and missiles. Let hundreds of foot-soldiers, having best weapons in their hands, exerting themselves in protecting the horse fit for the horse sacrifice, come to me.

16-30. Having heard these words of that magnanimous Lakṣmaṇa, the commander-in-chief Kālajit by name, made the (horse) ready. The horse adorned with ten stars, endowed with the charm of fine down, having faultless pearls round his neck, so also a gem round the extensive neck, having spotless beauty on the face, and blackish brightness on the ears, and with the mass of his reins held (by the commander-in-chief) with his hand, shone (there). The horse, with his face shining with (strips resembling) the digits (of the moon), adorned with bright gems, and beautified with necklaces of pearls, went out. At that time the lordly horse decorated with a white umbrella, adorned with a white chowrie, with his body surrounded (i.e. covered) by great loveliness, went out. Soldiers in front, in the midst, and in the rear, served him, as formerly gods waited upon Viṣṇu who deserved to be honoured. Then having called the entire army, very much crowded with hosts of elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers, he issued orders to it. Then the noise produced by the army that had collected (there), was heard. Then in that excellent city there was (heard) the sound of the kettle-drums. Due to the great agreeable and sharp sound of the heroes the peaks of mountains trembled and palaces shook. O king, there was a big sound of the perplexed horses. The earth as it were, moved, when it sounded by the impact of the wheels of chariots. The earth was, all around, blocked up with the herds of elephants that were moving (along it). Dust

moved there, and it screened the people (there). The great army full of men, being impelled by the commander-in-chief named Kālajit, moved out, covering the sun with its umbrellas. The best foot-soldiers, causing the battle-flurry, and ready for Rāma's (horse-)sacrifice, joyfully set out. All those (soldiers) having fragrant unguent of musk applied to their bodies, with their heads adorned with pure garlands of flowers, with their bodies adorned with the decorations of crowns and bracelets, and impelled by the king, set out. In this way, the excellent soldiers, holding bows, holding nooses and holding swords, and of loud steps, went to the great king. Thus the horse, marked for the sacrifice, scratching the ground with his hoofs, jumping in the sky (i.e. in the air), slowly reached the (sacrificial) hall.

31-42a. With his mind highly pleased on seeing the horse that had come (there), Rāma moved Vasiṣṭha to perform the (necessary) rite. Vasiṣṭha called Rāma along with (the image of) his wife made of gold, and made him perform the rite that would remove (the sin of) killing a brāhmaṇa. Rāma, the conqueror of his enemies' cities, practising the vow of celibacy, and holding a deer-horn got done that rite (through the brāhmaṇas). For the performance of the sacrifice he commenced (constructing) a basis furnished with a hall. The intelligent sage Vasiṣṭha, the old preceptor of Rāma's family, who was conversant with the Vedic concepts, became the preceptor there (i.e. at that sacrifice). Agastya, the treasure of penance, acting as the Brahmā-priest, performed the duties of that priest. The sage Vālmīki was the Adhvaryu-priest, and (the sage) Kaṇva (acted as) the doorkeeper. There were eight gates (to the hall) which were auspicious with ornamental arches. O brāhmaṇa, at each gate two brāhmaṇas, knowing the sacred hymns (were placed). At the eastern gate (were posted) the two best sages named Devala and Asita. At the southern gate (stood) the two great treasures of penance, viz. Kaśyapa and Atri. At the western gate (were) the two best (sages) Jātūkarṇya and Jābāli. At the northern gate (remained) the two ascetics—the two sages—Dvita and Ekata. O brāhmaṇa, having thus made the arrangement at the gates, Vasiṣṭha, born from a pitcher, started worshipping the best horse. Women whose husbands were alive,

who were adorned with (beautiful) garments and ornaments, started worshipping the best horse with turmeric, sacred rice grains, sandal etc., O brāhmaṇa. Then after having worshipped him, they waved lights before him and offered incense of agaru. Then by the order of the brāhmaṇa (viz. Vasiṣṭha), the courtezans offered him wishes for prosperity.

42b-54. After having worshipped him like this, he tied a note, bright and fashioned of gold purified with fire, on his spotless forehead to which sandal was applied, which was very fragrant with saffron etc., and which was all beautiful. There (i.e. in the note) he wrote the bright valour and power of Daśaratha's son (Rāma): "The magnanimous Rāma, the crest-jewel of all heroes, the remover of the pride of the heroes of their power, and the descendant of Raghu, is the son of him who was the banner of the solar family, who was a great archer and a teacher initiating (pupils) in archery, and whom all gods along with demons saluted with (i.e. by bowing down) their heads having gems (on them). Rāma's mother is the one born from the womb of the wife of the king of Kośala. Rāma, his (i.e. Daśaratha's) son, who was the gem born from her womb, who is fearful to his enemies, who is well instructed by the brāhmaṇa (Vasiṣṭha), is performing a horse-sacrifice to remove the sin due to his having killed the best brāhmaṇa named Rāvaṇa. (For that sacrifice) he has let loose this excellent horse, best among horses and well-protected by the moats (in the form) of great army surrounding him. The protector of the horse is Rāma's brother, Śatrughna, who had killed (the demon named) Lavaṇa, and who is accompanied by the multitude of the army (consisting of) elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers. Those kings who, through the pride of their strength, have the jealous anger (as): 'We are great archers, we are brave, we are mighty', should capture with force the horse adorned with jewelled necklaces, having the speed of the mind, going at will, (capable of) moving everywhere, and very bright. From them Rāma's brother Śatrughna will easily free him with points of arrows (i.e. pointed arrows) whetted on grindstones and discharged from his bow." The greatest sage wrote such and other things (in the note) and then let loose the horse with his glory shining due to the power of the arms of Rāma, the treasure of

beauty, being extremely swift and having the speed of the wind, and having a special property of moving in the nether world and on the earth.

55-74. Rāma, the best among the wielders of weapons ordered Śatrughna: "Go after the horse moving freely for protecting him. O Śatrughna go along the path of the horse. May good fortune attend upon you. O you who torment your enemies, may your arms conquer the enemies. O brave one, those warriors who fight with you, should be warded off by you. On this great earth, you, united with your hosts of virtues, protect the horse. You should not kill those who are asleep, who have fled, who have lost their garments, who are very much frightened, who are polite, who have done good deeds, by doing which (i.e. when you do like this) they will approve of (your) deed. O Śatrughna, you who desire (to have) religious merit, should not kill those who are without (i.e. who have lost their) chariots, who are afflicted with fear, and who say (to you): 'We belong to you.' He who would kill him who is humble, who is mad, who is asleep, who is frustrated, who is affected by fear, and who says: 'I belong to you', goes to a mean position. You who are full of all virtues, should not long for others' wealth, or for other man's wife; do not show interest in a mean person. O you conqueror in a battle, do not first strike the old (i.e. do not strike the old before they strike you). Being endowed with compassion, do not violate (the rule of) worshipping the venerable. Salute a cow and a brāhmaṇa, and a devotee of Viṣṇu possessing righteousness. Wherever you go after saluting (these), you will obtain success. Viṣṇu is the lord of all, is the witness (observing everything), and possesses a body that occupies everything. O you of mighty arms, O you descendant of Raghu, they who belong to him (i.e. Viṣṇu), who move in his form, who remember Viṣṇu remaining in the hearts of all, should be regarded as having a form similar to that of Viṣṇu. Those devotees of Viṣṇu for whom there is none that belongs to them, none that is a stranger, and for whom the enemy is like a friend, purify a sinner in a moment. They, to whom the Bhāgavata (Purāṇa) is dear, to whom the brāhmaṇas are dear, are sent here (i.e. to this world) from Vaikuṇṭha for purifying the world. Even that cāṇḍāla in whose mouth there is

Viṣṇu's name, in whose heart there is the ancient Viṣṇu, and in whose belly there is the offering of eatables presented to Viṣṇu, is dear to Viṣṇu. Salute them that are here, to whom the Vedas are dear and not the happiness due to the worldly existence, and who are devoted to their own way of life. There is no difference between Śiva and Viṣṇu; so also between Śiva (or Viṣṇu) and Brahmā. I carry (on my body) the dust particles of their feet, which are pure and which destroy sins. Those men, for whom Pārvatī, Gaṅgā, Mahālakṣmī, do not exist separately, should, all of them, be looked upon as having come here (i.e. to this world) from heaven. He who, in order to please Viṣṇu, protects him who has sought his refuge, and gives respect and makes presents according to his capacity, should be known as the best devotee of Viṣṇu. He who is devoted to the pair of feet of him (the utterance of) whose name quickly burns the heaps of great sins, is the devotee of Viṣṇu. By saluting those whose senses are controlled, whose mind also thinks of Viṣṇu (only), a man should purify (himself) from birth to death. Abandoning another man's wife like a sword, be the ground of the ornament of victory and welfare. Thus following my command, you will obtain the highest position and a praiseworthy good contact (with the highest Lord)."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Aśvamedha Horse Is Let Loose

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Having thus ordered (Śatrughna), the glorious Rāma, the tormentor of his enemies, looked at the heroes and spoke to them with (i.e. using) good words: "Protecting from the rear my brother Śatrughna, protecting the horse, and obeying his orders, who would vanquish, with his multitudes of missiles, all the heroes that would come (to fight) the chief one (i.e. Śatrughna), let him spreading his very great fame on the earth take up the sword of (i.e. offered by) me."

4-9. When Rāma spoke like this, Puṣkala, the son of Bharata, took that sword from the lotus-like hand of the king of the Raghu-family. "O lord, O master, being ready, holding all weapons and missiles and a bow and arrows, I shall go, guarding everyday, Śatrughna's rear. Today the entire earth will be conquered due to your valour. O very intelligent Rāmacandra, these (soldiers) are (just) a means. By your grace I am capable of warding off the entire (army of) gods, demons and human beings, (if it) approaches (us) to fight (with us). The lord will know everything on seeing my valour. To protect Śatrughna from the rear, here I go." Praising Bharata's son, who was speaking like this, and approving of (his words), the lord Viṣṇu (i.e. Rāma) praised all the chief heroes among the monkeys, led by (Hanūmat) born from the Wind.

10-13. (He said): "O great hero Hanūmat, carefully listen to my words. Due to your favour I obtained this kingdom free from trouble. To bring about my union with Sītā, you crossed the ocean. O monkey, O lord of monkeys, I know all your adventures. Being, by my command, the guardian of my army, (please) go. You should protect Śatrughna, my brother, as (you protected) me. O you very intelligent one, you have to enlighten my brother Śatrughna whenever he has confusion of mind."

14-18. Hearing the great (i.e. important) words of the intelligent Rāmacandra, he accepted them with (i.e. by bowing) his head, and saluted him. Then the great king (i.e. Rāma) instructed Jāmbavanta, the lord of the monkeys, and the most lustrous among them, to serve Raghunātha (i.e. Śatrughna). (He said:) "(All of) you like Aṅgada, Gavaya, Mainda, so also the monkey Dadhimukha, Sugrīva—the king of the monkeys, the two monkeys viz. Śatavali and Akṣika, (so also) Nīla, Nala, having the mind's speed and a master born from the body of a monkey, should be ready. All of you, being adorned with elephants, good horses, with armours as ornaments made of gold, with helmets, should go quickly."

Śeṣa said:

19. Then having called the good minister Sumantra, Rāma, shining with strength and power said to him: "O chief of the

ministers, say, which men, capable of protecting the horse should be employed now?"

20-33. Hearing the words spoken by him (i.e. Rāma), he, the killer of the enemy's heroes said: "O Raghunātha, listen to (the names of) the nine powerful kings, who have assembled here, who are archers, who are very learned, who are proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, and who (therefore,) are capable of protecting the horse. (They are:) Pratāpāgrya, Nīlaratna, so also king Lakṣmīnidhi, Riputāpa, Ugrahaya, and king Śastravid also. This Nīlaratna is a distinguished person; Mahāvīra, Rathāgraṇī (are also there). He, the fearless one, would alone protect a lakh (of soldiers) and would fight with a lakh of soldiers. Let him go with (an army consisting of) ten akṣauhiṇīs furnished with armours, and with my arms raised (to bless him). This Pratāpāgrya is one who destroyed the pride of his enemy. Best among those who know (the employment of) all missiles, he discharges the arrows with (both) the right and the left hands. Let this Daṇḍabhṛt, who is young and who is ready to destroy the enemy, and who holds a bow, go with (the army consisting of) twenty akṣauhiṇīs for the protection of the horse. In the same way, let this best king Lakṣmīnidhi who, having propitiated Indra studied (the employment of) missiles, go (with Śatrughna). He knows the employment and discharge of the missiles like Brahmāstra, Pāśupatyāstra, Garuḍa, and the one called Nāga, (so also) Mayūra, Nakula, Raudra, Vaiṣṇava, the one called Megha, Vajra, the one named Parvata, so also the one called Vāyavya. Let him, the crown (i.e. the best) of the brave, a hurricane to all the enemies, go with (soldiers numbering) one lakh from the army. Today let also this Riputāpa go, who is the foremost among archers, skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, and a wild fire to the bamboos in the form of the enemies. Let him go with the army consisting of four divisions. Let these mighty kings hold on their heads (i.e. obey) the order of Śatrughna. This great king Ugrāśva also knows (the use of) weapons. Let all of them, quite ready, go as the protectors of your horse."

34-36. Having heard these words of the minister, he was delighted and ordered those soldiers mentioned by Sumantra. They, desiring to wage war for a long time, and maddened after it, were glad on receiving Raghunātha's (i.e. Rāma's) order.

Ready with armours etc., and with the movements of the weapons and missiles, they, impelled by Sītā's husband, went in the company of Śatrughna.

Śeṣa said:

37-46. Then, as told by the sage (Vasiṣtha), Rāma honoured all the preceptors and sages (by giving them) presents as told (by Vasiṣtha). To the preceptor Rāma gave an elephant sixty years old, a horse having the mind's speed and adorned with golden necklaces, a golden chariot which was adorned with gems and jewels, to which four horses were yoked, and which was furnished with all necessary equipment. (He also gave him) a lakh of gems, and pearls measuring a hundred tulās (each of which is equal to 100 palas), a thousand tulās of bright lustre of corals, a very rich village crowded with many kinds of people, producing various kinds of crops, having many temples. In the same way he gave (presents) to the Brahmā-priest and to the Adhvaryu-priest. The best of the Raghus, having given profuse gifts to the priests, saluted them. Being honoured, they (said) with various words and blessings: "O Rāmacandra, the descendant of Raghu, O great king, live long." The great one (i.e. Rāma) gave the gifts of maidens, of land, of elephants, so also of horses, of gold, of sesamum with pearls, of food, water, and the excellent gift of fearlessness, so also all the gifts of gems, to brāhmaṇas. Give, (again and again) give wealth; do not say 'No' to anyone. One should give food, one should give food endowed with all pleasures.

47-49. Thus the sacrifice, accompanied by presents, full of the brāhmaṇas and with all auspicious rites, of the intelligent Rāma, proceeded. Then the younger brother of Rāma (viz. Śatrughna) went to his mother, saluted her (and said to her): "O auspicious one, give me leave; I am going just for the protection of the horse. With your grace, I, having conquered the group of the enemies, shall come (back) endowed with charm and accompanied by great kings and the best horse (let loose for the sacrifice)."

The mother said:

50-54. O (my) son, O great hero, go; may your journey be happy. O you of a good mind, having conquered all the hosts of

your enemies come (back). Take care of Puṣkala, the best among those who know the course of conduct, the mighty son of your brother, (and) still a child, with (i.e. indulging in) sport. O son, if you come (back), with Puṣkala, and endowed with good fortune, I shall be glad. Otherwise I shall be unhappy.

He said to his mother who was speaking like this: "Remembering the pair of your feet, I shall have good fortune. O auspicious one, having taken care of Puṣkala like my own body, and doing (things) befitting my name, I shall come back happily."

55-58. Speaking thus, the hero went to see the great Rāma dressed for the sacrifice and seated with the best sages in the sacrificial hall. The intelligent hero endowed with all grace, said: "O Rāma, give me leave to protect the horse." Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) too hearing those words, said: "God bless you. Do not kill a child, a woman, a mad person or one without a weapon." Then Janaka's son and Sītā's brother Lakṣmīnidhi, having smiled and having slightly moved his eyes said to Rāma:

Lakṣmīnidhi said:

59-64. O mighty-armed Rāmacandra, devoted to all righteous ways, instruct Śatrughna in such a way that he would be extraordinary. Doing a deed which is befitting his family, and doing what his elder brother had done, he would go to the highest place endowed with lustre and power. O great king, you said: 'One should not belittle a brāhmaṇa;' (but) your father had killed a brāhmaṇa, greatly devoted to his father. You also performed a deed very much abhorred in the world, (since) you had certainly killed a woman who should not have been killed. (And) O great king, the great valourous deed, viz. cutting off the ears of the demoness (Śūrpaṇakhā), which was done by his elder brother (Lakṣmaṇa) was not done by any one else. By your instruction Śatrughna will do the same thing. If, O lord, he would do like that, it would be unbecoming to the family.

65-71. To him, who was speaking like this, Rāma skilled in all kinds of speech, smiled, and spoke with a voice deep like that of a cloud: "May the tranquil meditating saints hear, who look equally upon pleasure and pain and who know such things as how to cross fully this (ocean of) mundane existence which is difficult

to cross. Those who are brave, who are great archers, who are skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles (alone) know the calling of war, and not (people) like you. Those who torment others and those who go astray, should be killed by kings who desire the good of all the people." Hearing these words spoken by the subduer of enemies (i.e. by Rāma) all those members of the assembly smiled. (Then Vasiṣṭha) born from the pitcher, let loose the horse that was worshipped and well adorned. Uttering this hymn, and touching the horse with the tip of his hand, Vasiṣṭha, born from a pitcher, let loose the horse, with a desire for victory: "O horse, move sportively over the entire earth. Since you are let loose for the (horse-) sacrifice, come back quickly."

72-75. The horse, that was let loose, and that was surrounded by all warriors skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, went with the speed of wind towards the eastern direction. The entire army shaking the earth moved on. Even Śeṣa held the earth with his hood slightly bent. The quarters were all around bright. The earth was full of beauty. Breezes blew gently from behind Śatrughna. The right arm of Śatrughna who was ready for the march, throbbed indicating (something) auspicious and leading to victory.

76-83. Puṣkala (the son of Bharata) entered his charming house which was rich with white balconies, and which had a jewelled quadrangular open shed in the middle of its courtyard. There he saw his wife who was greatly devoted to her husband, who was delighted when he was partially seen and who was eager to see her husband. She was chewing piper-betal (mixed) with camphor with her mouth resembling a lotus. Her very beautiful nose was like a sharp blade (of a sword). There were fine bracelets (worn) on her arms resembling lotus-stalks. Her excellent breasts were like the kapittha fruits. Her round hips were charming due to the knot of the wearing garment. Her very delicate feet had (worn) anklets. She saw her good husband. Having embraced his dear wife, speaking in a faltering tone, and with her body filled with the embrace (pressing) her breasts, he said: "O auspicious lady, by Rāma's order I having a chariot and looking after the sacrificial horse, am going guarding the rear of Śatrughna. You should serve my mothers by gently rubbing their feet etc., eating (the food) left over by them and showing great regard for doing

(things told) by them. All the auspicious ladies, devoted to their husbands, like Lopāmudrā, should not be insulted by you, O timid one. They are adorned by the strength of their own penance."

CHAPTER TWELVE

Ahicchatrā City, King Sumada and Kāma

Śeṣa said :

1-14. She, smiling a little and looking at him with great love, spoke in a faltering voice to her husband who had spoken thus: "O lord, may you be victorious everywhere in battles (i.e. in every battle). You should obey Śatrughna's order in such a way that the horse would be protected. Always remember (this) your servant, always following your foot (steps). O lord, my mind never goes away from you to any other (person). O dear one, you should never think of me in a great battle. When I am (lurking) in your heart, victory in the battle is doubtful. O you lotus-eyed one, you should act in such a way that Urmilā and others will not laugh at me and clap their hands on seeing me (and say:) 'This is the wife of the great coward, running away in (i.e. from) the battle. When the cowards fight, where can there be an opportunity for the brave? O you of mighty arms, act, while protecting Rāma's horse, in such a way that the wives of my brothers-in-law will not loudly laugh (at me). You are everywhere a warrior first. The ones who are behind you, and the mighty enemies should be made deaf with the twang of your bow (-string). The enemy's army should be speedily confused with fear due to the dread of the sword in your raised hand. By conquering your enemies you should adorn this great family. O lord, O you of mighty arms, go; may you have good fortune here (i.e. in your undertaking). Quickly take this bow which is adorned with a great string (and with a great virtue), and hearing the roar of which the host of the enemies becomes greatly frightened. O hero, tie up these two quivers which are full with tips of arrows

(i.e. pointed arrows) capable of killing crores of enemies, so that happiness will take place. Put this armour on your body which is handsome like thunder-bolt and so is strong enough to remove darkness. O dear one, put on your crest (i.e. head) this beautiful helmet. Put on these two bright ear-rings decorated with jewels and gems."

15. Looking at the hero's daughter (i.e. brave lady) who spoke spotless words in this way, and looking at her body with his lotus-like eyes, he, the conqueror of enemies, capable of fighting, and extremely wise one, who had become extremely joyful, said:

Puṣkala said :

16-18. O dear one, I shall do all that you tell me. O Kāntimatī, you will have the longed-for fame as the wife of a hero."

Saying so the mighty one took all (the things like) the excellent armour and helmet, the bow, the two quivers and the sword given by (his wife) Kāntimatī. Having put on all those (things), the great hero endowed with great charm, and skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, looked extremely handsome.

19-23a. That chaste wife Kāntimatī repeatedly waved lights in front of him who was endowed with the beauty of the missiles and weapons, adorned with a garland of (i.e. fit for) a hero and smeared with saffron, aguru (sandal), musk, sandal etc. and adorned up to his knees with garlands of various flowers. Having repeatedly waved lights before him and with tears trickling from her unsteady eyes, she embraced her husband. Having closely embraced her for a long time, he comforted her: "O Kāntimatī, wife of a hero, do not experience (grief due to) separation from me. O you beautiful and chaste lady, here I am near you."

23b-24. Speaking thus to his wife, he got into the excellent chariot. That lady (Kāntimatī), greatly devoted to her husband, looked with eyes, void of winking, at her best husband, who was going (away from her).

25-28. He (then) went to see his father and his mother beside herself with love. Going to the father and mother, he joyfully saluted them with his head (bent down). The mother, having embraced her son, put him on her lap; (and) shedding tears profusely, said to him: "May it be well with you!" He said to his

father Bharata: "The great Rāma is performing the (horse-) sacrifice. The magnanimous Lakṣmaṇa and you have to take care of him." Commanded with joyful words by his mother and father, he went to Śatrughna's army adorned with great heroes.

29-31. The best horse (let loose) for the great sacrifice of (Rāma), the ornament of (the) Raghu (-family), surrounded by the brave warriors occupying chariots, foot-soldiers, good horses and horsemen gladly moved (ahead). Endowed with all charm, he went to the Pāñcāla country, the Kuru country, Uttara-kuru, Daśārṇa and Śrī Viśāla countries. Everywhere hearing about the entire glory of Rāma, which brought about the protection of his devotees by killing the demon Rāvaṇa (he went ahead).

32-35a. Rāma who also commenced the rite like the horse-sacrifice, spread his fame in the world and protected the people from fear. The great excellent Śatrughna gave them necklaces, various gems, great wealth and dwellings. Rāma's excellent minister, bright and proficient in all branches of knowledge, Sumati by name, followed Śatrughna. The great hero went with him to many villages and countries.

35b-38. Due to Rāma's valour, nobody snatched the horse. Many lords of countries who were very mighty and brave, who were accompanied by elephants, horses, chariots, foot-soldiers—(i.e. the army with) four divisions—took with them much wealth along with pearls and rubies, and again and again saluted Śatrughna who had come for the protection of the earth. (They said to Śatrughna:) "O descendant of Raghu, all this—this kingdom, this wealth, along with my sons, beasts and relatives—belongs to Rāmacandra, and not to me."

39. Having heard these (words) uttered by them, Śatrughna, the killer of the enemy's warriors, having made them recognize his command there, went with them along the path.

40-52. O brāhmaṇa, in this way gradually Śatrughna along with the horse reached Ahicchatrā city which was crowded with various people, which was full of brāhmaṇas and the twice-born (i.e. kṣatriyas and vaiśyas), which was decorated with different gems, which was adorned with golden and crystal mansions and town-gates, where, in all mansions, were seen ladies who had lotus-like faces, who excelled Rambhā (in beauty), and who were endowed with grace; where the heroes, graceful with good con-

duct, enjoying all pleasures like the followers of Kubera, with bows in their hands, proficient in taking aim with an arrow, delighted (their) king named Sumada. The lord (i.e. Śatrughna), saw, from a distance, the city like this. In its vicinity was a park, endowed with loveliness. Śatrughna, the killer of his enemy's soldiers, saw (that park) which appeared beautiful with punnāga, nāgacampa, tilaka, devadāru, aśoka, pāṭala, cūta (i.e. mango), mandāra, kovidāraka, āmra, jambu, kadamba, priyāla, and panasa (trees); so also with śāla, tāla, tamāla, mallikā, jāti, yūthi, nīpa, kadamba, bakula, campaka, madana and other trees. The horse entered that (park) adorned with tamāla, tāla and other (trees). The hero (i.e. Śatrughna), whose lotus-like feet were served by archers, just went after him. There he saw a wonderfully constructed temple, which was adorned with sapphires, lapis lazuli and emeralds, which was fit to be enjoyed by gods, which resembled the peak of the Kailāsa (mountain), which was adorned with golden pillars, and which was the best among temples. Having seen that excellent temple, Rāma's brother asked Sumati, his minister, the best among speakers:

Śatrughna said:

53. O best minister, tell (me), what this is; of what deity it is the abode; which deity is worshipped here; and for what purpose the deity has stayed here, O sinless one.

54-59. Having heard this, the omniscient minister said: "O hero, listen attentively to the full and proper (account). Know this to be the great seat, giving happiness to all, of Kāmākṣā, by seeing whom, O lord of beings, everything is secured, (and) by praising and saluting whom gods and demons have obtained all (their) glory. She is the giver of (the four goods of human life, viz.) Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa; she is kind to her devotees. She, who was formerly implored by Sumada, the king of Ahicchatrā, and who removes the misery of her devotees, lives here and does everything (for her devotees). O Śatrughna, O you crest-jewel of all heroes, salute her. Having saluted her, you will quickly obtain the purity which is difficult to be got by gods and demons." Having heard those words of (i.e. uttered by) him, Śatrughna, the tormentor of his enemies, the best among men, ask-

ed (him) the entire account of men, asked (him) the entire account of Bhavānī.

Śatrughna said :

60-61. Who is (this) king Sumada? Which penance did he practise due to which the mother of all the worlds, that dwells here, is pleased? O great minister, tell me all that which is full of diverse things. O you very intelligent one, since you know it correctly, therefore tell it to me.

Sumati said :

62-70. (There is) the pure mountain Hemakūṭa which is adorned by all gods. There is a pure, holy place, very much frequented by hosts of sages. Sumada whose mother, father and subjects were killed by all his feudatory kings, his enemies, went to that (mountain) for (practising) penance. With his sight fixed on the tip of his nose, and remembering mentally the mother of the worlds, he, (standing) on one foot, meditated for three years. Eating dry leaves for three years, he practised very severe penance, very difficult to practise. For three years he plunged himself (i.e. remained)in water in the cold season. In summer he practised (the vow of) the five fires; and in rainy season he remained looking up to the clouds. The wise one, restraining the breath in his heart and remembering Bhavānī, did not look at anything (else) for three years. When the twelfth year passed, Indra, seeing his great penance, very much contemplated in his mind, and through fear, vied with him. He (then) ordered Cupid surrounded by his followers, properly accompanied by celestial nymphs, and eager for the victory of Brahmā, Indra etc.: "O Cupid, O friend, O you infatuating one, go and do what is agreeable to me. Act in such a way that there would be an obstacle in the penance of (i.e. being practised by) Sumada."

71. Hearing these important words of Indra, the lord (i.e. Kāma) himself, who was very proud of conquering everything, spoke, O descendant of Raghu:

Kāma said :

72-74. O lord, who is this Sumada? And how little is his penance? I disturb the penance of (even) Brahmā and others;

then what need I say of him? Formerly the Moon, completely disturbed by the power of my arrows, went to Tārā.[1] You too went to Ahalyā, and Viśvāmitra to Menakā. O lord of gods, when I, (your) servant, am (here), do not be worried. This I go to Sumada. O respectable one, look after the gods.

75-86. Having said so, god Cupid, accompanied by his friend Spring and groups of celestial nymphs went to Hemakūṭa mountain. There Spring quickly made all trees full of flowers and fruits and noisy with cuckoos and rows of bees. Very cool breezes, resorting to (i.e. coming from) the southern quarter, and full of (the fragrance of) the flowers of cloves (growing on) the bank of the Kṛtāmala river, were blowing. When the forest was like this, the celestial nymph named Rambhā, surrounded by her friends, came near Sumada. She who was proficient in playing upon many musical instruments like tabor, drum, and adorned with a (sweet) voice like that of a kinnara, started singing. Then on hearing her music, on seeing (that) charming Spring, and (on hearing) the charming notes of cuckoos, the wise king turned his eyes. Then seeing the king awakened (i.e. who had opened his eyes), Cupid, having flowers as his weapons, hastened, and, O innocent one, quickly made ready his bow from behind him. One celestial nymph with bud-like eyes shampooed the king's feet. Another nymph cast glances at him. Another one made (coquettish) gestures. Thus crowded by the celestial nymphs and with his mind afflicted by the passion of love, the intelligent one, the crest-jewel (i.e. the best) of those who have restrained their senses, thought: 'These are the excellent celestial nymphs, all sent by Indra, and creating an obstacle in my penance; they will do exactly (as they are ordered by Indra).' Thinking like this, he who was practising excellent penance, said to those excellent females: "Who are you? Where do you stay? What do you desire? A great miracle has taken place that you are seen. You who are difficult to be obtained by penance, have come (here) due to my penance."

1. Tārā—Name of the wife of Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of gods. She was on one occasion carried off by Soma (the Moon) who refused to deliver her up to her husband when demanded. A fierce contest then ensued and Brahmā had at last to compel Soma to restore her to her husband. Tārā gave birth to a son named Budha who became the ancestor of the Lunar race of kings.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Śatrughna Enters Ahicchatrā City

Śeṣa said:

1-8. Hearing these words of Sumada, the treasure of penance, the army of Cupid, i.e. the celestial nymphs like Rambhā, joyfully said to him: "O dear one, all of us, beautiful damsels, have come to you due to your austerities. Enjoy the wealth of our youth, and give up the fruit of your penance. This is the pleasing Ghṛtācī, having a body like campaka, and charming due to the fragrance of camphor. You may enjoy the nectar from her mouth. O illustrious one, O dear one, quickly enjoy her who has charming gestures, whose body is attractive, whose breasts are compact and large, who has come (to you) as a result of your severe penance; and give up all your unhappiness. Firmly embrace me who am adorned with priceless ornaments, whose breasts are graced with the garland of mandara flowers, and who am expert in thinking about many tales about sexual union. Drink the nectar coming out from my mouth; enjoy, having reached the peak of Sumeru resorted to by means of great religious merit, pleasures—the fruit of your good penance. Let Tilottamā adorned with youth and beauty, hold on your head two good chowries—removing heat—like two streams of Gaṅgā with a constant flow, O most handsome one. O you, listen to the charming account of Cupid; drink the nectar longed for by the hosts of gods etc.; O lord, having, along with excellent damsels, reached the garden called Nandana, amuse yourself (there)."

9-10. Hearing these words spoken by them, the very intelligent king thought: 'Wherefrom have they come? By means of my penance I have created these celestial damsels. (But) this has become an impediment. What should I do now?' The very intelligent king Sumada who was thus anxious, thinking in his mind (i.e. to himself), spoke to the celestial damsels:

11-14. "You remain in my mind in the form of the mother of the world. That whom I think of is also said to be of your form. The pleasures in heaven, which you described, are worthless and uncertain. My mistress, waited upon by me with devotion, will give me a boon. Due to her grace Brahmā reached Satyaloka

and became great. She who puts an end to the miseries of her devotees, will give me everything. What is (the use of) Nandana? What is (the use of) the mountain well-adorned with gold? What is the use of nectar which is obtained with very little religious merit and which has given unhappiness to demons?"

15-16. Hearing these words of the king, Cupid struck him with various arrows, but could do nothing to him. The beautiful (celestial) damsels were unable to disturb his mind through glances, sounds of their anklets, embraces and through looking at him.

17. Having gone, as they had come, to Indra, they said: "The king is firm-minded." Hearing that, Indra was frightened (thinking that) his undertaking was fruitless.

18-22. Then (goddess) Ambikā, having seen the king who had conquered his senses, settled at her lotus-like feet, was extremely pleased and appeared before him. She, the beautiful one, was seated on the back of a lion; the excellent one had held (in her hands) nooses and goads; the mother, purifying those who purify the world, had a bow and arrows (in her hands). The intelligent one (i.e. king Sumada), having seen the mother lustrous like crores of suns, and holding a bow, arrows and hooks, was delighted. Having many times saluted by (bending down) his head the mother obtained through devotion, smiling, and repeatedly touching his body with her hand, the very intelligent king, with the functions of his mind full of devotion and with his body adorned with horripilation, praised her with a faltering voice:

23-30. "O goddess, O great goddess, victory to you, who alone are waited upon by the hosts of devotees, and O innocent one, you whose pair of feet is worshipped by the lords of gods like Brahmā, Rudra. O mother, this (world consisting of) the mobile and the immobile, is put in motion by a portion of you. All that does not exist without you. O auspicious mother, I salute you. The earth is settled by you through the strength of your prop. (So) it, adorned with mountains, rivers, gardens, quarter-elephants, does not shake. (Due to you) the sun, heating the earth with his sharp rays, shines in the sky; through your power he takes the water existing on the earth, and releases it (in the form of rain). Let the fire remaining within and without

(you) cause happiness to the worlds due to your power, O great goddess, saluted by gods and demons. You are learning, you are the wonderful, divine power of Viṣṇu, who alone protects the world. O you fascinating one, through your own power you create this (world) and look after it. All gods obtain perfection from you and go to (i.e. secure) happiness. O you who bless (your devotees) with your grace, O you who are saluted (by them), O you, to whom your devotees are dear, look after me, protect me, O mother, who am your servant, and who am devoted to your feet, O you the ancestor of the great Puruṣa."

Śeṣa said:

31-33. The mother of the world, who was thus pleased, said to that devotee Sumada of an emaciated body: "Ask for an excellent boon." Hearing these words king Sumada who was extremely delighted, asked for his own kingdom which was (formerly) snatched away (from him) and the troublesome wicked persons in which were killed, and for inviolable devotion to the pair of feet of the great goddess, the devotion that would (cause) emancipation at the end of life and would help to cross the ocean of the mundane existence.

Kāmākṣā said:

34-44. O Sumada, get (back) your kingdom in which everywhere the troublesome persons were killed. Be one whose pair of the lotus-like feet is resorted to by gems of (i.e. excellent) women. O you called Sumada, may you not be defeated by your enemies. When Rāma, of great glory, will, after having killed Rāvaṇa, perform the horse-sacrifice, adorned with all requisites, and when his brother Śatrughna, the great hero and the killer of the enemies' soldiers will come here looking after the horse and surrounded by brave men, you will present to him your entire prosperous kingdom and wealth etc., will look after the horse, and will move everywhere on the earth along with your own warriors and pre-eminent archers, O you, very intelligent one. Then having saluted Rāma served by Brahmā, Indra and Śiva, you will obtain release difficult to be obtained by meditating saints having restraint as their means. I shall stay here till Rāma's

horse comes here. After that, having emancipated you, I shall go to the highest position.

Saying so, the goddess, served by gods and demons, disappeared. Sumada too, having killed his enemies, became the king in Ahicchatrā. This king, though capable and possessing army and horses (or elephants), will not snatch your horse, (as) he is well instructed by (the goddess), the wonderful power (of the lord). O you omniscient one, having heard that the best sacrificial horse has come near the city, and (that) you also (have approached the city), the king named Sumada will now give everything to you, the very intelligent one, whose feet are served by great kings, due to the valour of the great king Rāmacandra.

Śeṣa said:

45-48. The intelligent, mighty and very glorious (Śatrughna), having heard this account of Sumada, said: 'Good, good' and was delighted. The lord of Ahicchatrā, surrounded by all his attendants and waited upon by many kṣatriyas, was happily seated in his assembly. Brāhmaṇas learned in the Vedas, and wealthy and prosperous vaiśyas waited upon king Sumada endowed with charm. The just and excellent brāhmaṇas blessed the king, the only protector of all the people, with Vedic learning and diversion.

49-51. At this time, someone came (there) and said to the king: "O you lord, I do not know whose horse, with a note (on his head) is (i.e. has come) near (the city)." Hearing that, he quickly sent a superior servant (i.e. officer): "Ascertain as to who the king is whose horse (has come) near my city." The servant having gone there and having ascertained from the beginning, reported it to the king, waited upon by great kṣatriyas.

52-54. The wise king who was everyday thinking about Rāma's horse, having heard (that he had come) ordered all people: "All my people who possess wealth and grains, should put up ornamental arches on their houses in the city. Let thousands of beautiful maidens, adorned with all ornaments, and mounted upon elephants, go forth (to great) Śatrughna."

55-57. Having ordered all like this the king himself surrounded by his sons, grandsons and queen went (to receive Śatru-

ghna). Śatrughna, accompanied by many very great ministers, good warriors, saw the brave king named Sumada.

58-61. Then the great king, having come (there) joyfully saluted Śatrughna who was accompanied by elephants, foot-soldiers, the tormentors of enemies, and accompanied by horsemen, and horses that were adorned with brave soldiers and who was accompanied by heroes. (He said to Śatrughna:) "I am blessed, I am satisfied, my body is honoured. Quickly accept this kingdom, adorned with great kings, and well filled (i.e. furnished) with great wealth like large rubies and pearls. O lord, I have been waiting for a long time for the arrival of the horse. Everything that Kāmākṣā had told before, has now come about just as (she had told). See my city, and make the men (i.e. its citizens) blessed. O you younger brother of Rāma, O you very intelligent one, purify our entire family."

62-67. Saying so, he mounted (Śatrughna) on an elephant very bright like the moon, also (put up) Puṣkala (on the elephant), and he himself also mounted (upon the elephant). At that time, the sound of musical instruments like the kettle-drums, impelled by the great king Sumada, pervaded (the atmosphere). Maidens, employed by the lord (i.e. Sumada), having come to the great lord of kings viz. Śatrughna whose feet were waited upon by Indra and others, felicitated him with the heaps of pearls which were (held by them) in their hands. Having slowly come into the city, he who was joyfully glorified by people, reached the house that was decorated with ornamental arches etc. King Śatrughna, accompanied by the gem of the horse, graced by heroes, and led by king (Sumada) reached the house. Having honoured Rāma's younger brother with materials of worship etc. (Sumada) offered everything to the intelligent Rāmacandra.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Cyavana Episode

Śeṣa said :

1. Then, the king, the best among men, longing to listen to the excellent account of Rāma, spoke to Śatrughna who was pleased with the reception.

Sumada said :

2-5. I hope Rāma who is the crest-jewel of the entire world, who has descended (on the earth) to protect his devotees, and who has favoured me, is happy. The people who with the cups of their eyes constantly drink the lotus in the form of Rāma's face and are delighted, are blessed in the city (of Ayodhyā). O you best among men, O you very intelligent one, my entire wealth and all my family, land etc. and my possessions are blessed. Formerly, Kāmākṣā, tender with kindness, showed favour to me. (She told me:) "With your family you will see the lotus-like face of Rāma."

6. When that hero, the best king Sumada spoke this, he told him all the exalted virtues of the lord of Raghus (i.e. Rāma).

7-11. Having stayed there for three nights, (Śatrughna) the younger brother of the lord of Raghus, and the highly intelligent one, decided to proceed further with the king. Then knowing that, Sumada, with the approval of the great king Śatrughna and of Puṣkala, quickly consecrated his son on the kingdom (i.e. consecrated his son as the king). The highly intelligent one gave garments, many jewels and various kinds of riches to the servants of Śatrughna. With his highly wise ministers, foot-soldiers, horses, elephants, good horses and crores of chariots he (i.e. Śatrughna) started to go (i.e. proceed). Śatrughna, having the valour of Raghunātha, then went smiling along the way with that Sumada, the holder of a bow (i.e. the archer).

12-15. The best horse after having reached the bank of Payoṣṇī went (further). All the warriors, the protectors of the horse, went after him. (Śatrughna) saw various hermitages of sages doing excellent penance. Everywhere he heard the excellent qualities of Raghunātha (being narrated by the sages). (The sages said:)

"Here goes the intelligent horse protected by Viṣṇu, so also repeatedly protected by monkeys devoted to Viṣṇu (i.e. Rāma), followed by excellent horses." The great lord (i.e. Śatrughna) hearing everywhere these words of (i.e. uttered by) the sages with feelings saturated with devotion (for Rāma), was pleased.

16-22. And he saw a holy hermitage crowded with people and (other) beings, removing by the sounds of Veda the entire inauspicious things (i.e. sins) of people that heard (the sounds of the Veda), purifying the entire atmosphere by means of the smoke of the perpetual domestic fire, and looking charming due to the sacrificial posts (put up) for the many sacrifices of (i.e. performed by) the excellent sages. There in that hermitage cows fit to be looked after, were looked after by a lion; in it the rats did not dig a hole through the fear of a cat; snakes constantly played with peacocks and mongooses. There (i.e. in the hermitage) elephants and lions, having become friends, always stay. The black antelopes (living) there showed interest in eating the rice growing wild, and being protected by groups of sages were not afraid of death. The cows there had udders like pitchers, and their bodies were like that of Nandinī (the daughter of the divine cow, Surabhi). They purified the earth with the dust raised by their feet (i.e. hoofs). Seeing the sages having sacred fuel fit for the religious rites in their lotus-like hands (Śatrughna said to) the all knowing minister of Rāma, viz. Sumati:

Śatrughna said:

23-25. O Sumati, of which sage is the place that appears before (us), that is resorted to by beings having no enmity (for one another), and is crowded with hosts of sages? I shall hear the account of the sages, and by means of their accounts and descriptions etc. I shall render my body pure.

Having heard this statement of the magnanimous Śatrughna, the minister of the intelligent Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) told him:

Sumati said:

26-29. Know this to be Cyavana's hermitage adorned by great ascetics, crowded with beings free from enmity and full of the wives of the sages; and he who is the great sage (viz. Cyavana)

obtained a portion of the oblation of the two physicians of gods (i.e. the Aśvins). He broke (down) the pride of Indra in the sacrifice of the Self-born (Brahmā). Nobody obtains the prowess of the great sage, rich with the power of penance and having the image of the Vedas.

(Śatrughna) Rāma's younger brother, having heard the things about the eminent Cyavana, asked everything including the breaking of Indra's pride (i.e. Indra's humiliation) etc.

Śatrughna said:

30. When did he receive the portion of the oblation of the two wonder-workers (i.e. the two Aśvins) in the rows of gods? What did the lord of gods do at the sacrifice performed by Brahmā?

Sumati said:

31-34. There was a famous sage named Bhṛgu in the family of Brahmā. Once in the evening he had gone (out) to collect sacred fuel. At that time a very strong demon, Damana (by name), came there and uttered these very fearful words: "Where is that so-called sage? Where is that innocent lady?" He, full of anger, repeatedly uttered these words. At that time, Fire, realising that danger was imminent from the demon, showed him the praiseworthy, pregnant wife of him (i.e. of Bhṛgu).

35-36. The demon snatched her who was crying like an osprey: "O Bhṛgu, protect me, O (my) lord, protect me; O (my) husband, O treasure of penance, protect me." The wicked one took her who was speaking like this and who was afflicted, and went out. He admonished that chaste (wife) of Bhṛgu with the strokes of (i.e. with abusive) words.

37-39. Then from her uterus the foetus of blazing eyes, afflicted with great fear, and as it were the fire born of (her) body, fell (out). He said: "O you of a wicked mind, do not go; be reduced to ashes quickly. Having touched the chaste lady, you will not obtain bliss." He, who was thus addressed, fell down with his body reduced to ashes. The mother, who was agitated, took the child and went to the hermitage (of her husband).

40-41. Bhṛgu, knowing all that was done by Fire, was full of

anger, and cursed (him): "O you who gave a suggestion to the wicked enemy, be one who consumes everything." Then Fire who was (thus) cursed, was afflicted with grief and seized his feet. (He said to Bhṛgu:) "O lord, ocean of compassion, O you highly intelligent one, (please) favour me. I told a lie through fear, and not through malice against (my) preceptor (i.e. you). Therefore, O you crest-jewel of piety, be kind to me."

42. Then (Bhṛgu) favoured him. (He said:) "You will consume everything, (yet will be) pure." Thus the ascetic, wet with (i.e. soft due to) compassion, spoke to him.

43-45. The brāhmaṇa (i.e. Bhṛgu) who was very auspicious, who was pure, having darbhas in his hands, performed, according to the rule, the ceremony performed at the birth of a child, of the son that had fallen from the uterus. All the sages called him 'Cyavana' on account of his having fallen (from the uterus). Gradually he grew like the moon of the first night (of the month, waxing) in the bright half of (the month).

46-48. Surrounded by all his disciples who were endowed with the power of penance, he went to Revā, the only purifier of the world, to practise penance. The great one, having gone there, practised penance for a myriad of years. On his shoulders grew the kiṁśuka (trees) adorned with anthills. The eager deer, having come (to him) scratched (their bodies) against his body. Enveloped (i.e. engaged) in irresistible penance, he was aware of nothing.

49-56. Sometime lord Manu got ready for a pilgrimage. He, surrounded by a great army, went to Revā. There, having bathed in the great river, having gratified the manes and the deities, he gave gifts to brāhmaṇas to please Viṣṇu. His beautiful daughter (adorned) with ornaments of heated gold and accompanied by (her) friends, moved here and there in the forest. There she saw an anthill adorned with a great tree. She (also) saw some lustre, free from twinkling and winking (i.e. steadfast). Having gone there, she pierced it with small sticks. Seeing blood flowing (from it), the king's daughter was sad and extremely unhappy. Covered with the sin, she told about it neither to her mother, nor to her father. She, afflicted with fear, grieved to herself. O king, the earth quacked, and a meteor fell from the sky. All the directions became smoky, and the sun was surrounded by a halo. Then the

king's horses perished, and many elephants died. Wealth, along with gems, perished; and there was feud among (the king's men) themselves.

57-59. Seeing that, the king (i.e. Manu) was afraid, and was slightly dejected. He asked his men. (He said:) "Somebody has wronged the sage?" Successively having come to know that act of his daughter, (and) being extremely unhappy, he went there with his army and horses. Having seen the treasure of penance endowed with great penance, he praised and pleased him (and said): "O best sage, be kind to me."

60-65. The best sage, having great penance, being pleased with him, said (to him): "Know that all that mischief is done by your daughter. O great king, your daughter burst (my) eyes. Profuse blood flew (out). (Though) aware of it, she did not say (anything) to you. Therefore, O great king, you should give her to me (i.e. in marriage) according to the proper rite. Then the calamity will cease. There is no doubt about it." Hearing that the king was grieved and gave his daughter, endowed with youth, beauty and good character, to the blind (sage). When the king gave the lotus-eyed daughter (in marriage to the sage), all the evil things caused by the sage's wrath, subsided. The king, grieved and full of compassion, having given his daughter to the sage, the treasure of penance, again went (back) to his city.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Cyavana's Penance and Enjoyments

Sumati said :

1-7. Then the sage went to his hermitage with Manu's daughter, his wife, endowed with yoga (abstraction), and with all sins destroyed was happy. That daughter of Manu, served, like her family-deity giving desired objects, her excellent husband who was blind, whose prowess was lost due to old age, and was excellent due to having intelligence like Viṣṇu. She who knew (his) internal thoughts, served her dear husband who was a trea-

sure of penance, and the charming one became very much delighted like Śacī (i.e. Indrāṇī) diligent in serving Indra. The beautiful, slim princess, endowed with all (good) characteristics, and subsisting on fruits, roots and water, served his feet. She was always eagerly engaged in obeying his words (i.e. orders) and in serving him, and engaged in the welfare of all beings she spent her time. Having given up (i.e. free from) desires, religious hypocrisy, hatred, greed, sin and pride, and always careful and diligent, she pleased Cyavana. O great king, having, in this way, served him for a thousand years with words and physical acts, she entertained a desire.

8-9. Once the two physicians of gods (i.e. the two Aśvins) came to the sage's hermitage. Having well honoured them with a good reception, she worshipped them. The two handsome (Aśvins), with their minds pleased due to the worship, respectful offering, and water for washing the feet, offered by the daughter of Śaryāti, affectionately said to the beautiful lady: "Ask for a boon".

10-16a. The princess (Sukanyā), the best among the intelligent, seeing the two physicians of gods pleased, made up her mind to ask for a boon. Knowing the intention of her husband, the princess said (to them): "O gods, if you are pleased then give (back) the sight of my husband." Having heard these charming words of Sukanyā, and having observed her chastity, the best among the physicians said: "If your husband will give us a portion of (the oblations offered to) gods, then we shall now make his eyes endowed with a clear sight." Cyavana too said "yes" (i.e. agreed to) giving a portion to the granters of the boon. Then the Aśvins, being delighted, said to (him), the best among those who practise penance: "Go down into this pond fashioned by siddhas." Thus told by the Aśvins, he who was seized by old age, and (on whose body) the veins had stretched, got into the pond; the Aśvins also got down into it.

16b-20. Three men, very handsome and dear to women, came up (from the pond). They had golden necklaces and ear-rings (on their bodies). Their forms were similar and they had put on excellent garments. Not (being able) to recognize her husband, the chaste lady surrendered herself to the Aśvins. Pointing out her husband to her, and being pleased with her chastity, they took

leave of the sage and went to heaven in an aeroplane. They had a hope of a portion being kept for them when a sacrifice was performed. After a long time, he, oppressed with passion of love, tenderly spoke, with words faltering due to love, to her who was lean and emaciated due to practising a vow.

21-24. "O beautiful young lady, I am today pleased with the great service done with exclusive devotion in your heart by you giving me respect. You did not look upon as praiseworthy (i.e. you did not care for) your body—that is very much loved by human beings—in wasting (i.e. when you wasted) it for my sake in serving me. Look, I shall give you all those favours which have been won by me, engaged in my own duty, and which are free from fear and grief, and which are agreeable due to your serving me at every step, from the Lord by means of my concentration, knowledge and abstract meditation. Then what about other objects created and falling from the stretched out eyebrow of the Lord of wide strides? You are endowed with supernatural powers; enjoy riches obtained by your righteousness, divine and difficult to be obtained by men due to displeasure of kings." Having looked at him, who was speaking like this, proficient in the lore of the entire wonderful power of women, she understood it; and with her face smiling and glittering due to her looking (at him) with a little bashfulness, she spoke in words perturbed due to respect and love.

Sukanyā said :

25-26. O best brāhmaṇa, O my lord, O mighty one, I know this is indeed achieved in the case of you, the lord of infallible wonderful power; I told you about the right time: Let there be coition with you, the great one; for chaste women a child is an excellence. Tell (me) in this case in accordance with the teaching (of the sacred texts), the act due to which you with a desire to enjoy me have been extremely emaciated. That would be accomplished. O you, being determined be kind to me, the bold one. Tell me what is proper about the abode of the lord.

Sumati said :

27-36. Desiring (to do what was) dear to his beloved, Cyavana resorted to abstract meditation; O king, then only he fashi-

oned an aeroplane going at the will (of the occupant). It yielded all desires; it was charming; it was endowed with all gems; it had the collection of all objects; it was furnished with jewelled pillars; it was endowed with divine beds; it was comfortable in all seasons; it was adorned with variegated pieces of silken cloth and banners; so also with garlands and variegated wreaths and with sweetly humming bees; it was bright with various kinds of garments of silk and fine garments; it was beautiful with mats put separately in each one of the residences one above the other, and also with beds, fans etc. It was adorned at various places with craft-works done there. It was furnished with a slab of great emeralds and altars of corals. It shone with the threshold of corals at the doors. It had adamant door-panels. It was resorted to by (i.e. it had) golden pitchers on the sapphire-tops. It was furnished with variegated canopies with necklaces hanging from walls fashioned with bright best rubies. It had the cooing (sound) of the groups of swans and pigeons, who having climbed up (the walls) again and again found them to be artificial. It had been properly furnished with sporting places, causing wonder to oneself.

37-54. He, who knew the hearts of all beings, said to her who was thus looking at the abode with a heart that was not very much pleased: "O timid one, after having dived into this pond, get into this aeroplane." She, whose eyes were like lotuses, who had worn a dusty garment, whose hair was tied into a braid, whose body was covered with dust and mud, whose breasts were variegated, gladly entered that auspicious pond of water. In the lake lived one hundred and ten damsels in a mansion. All of them were young. They, having the fragrance of lotuses, saw her. Seeing her, the damsels got up, and with the palms of their hands joined said: "We are your servants, order us what we should do." O you who respect (others), they having bathed that high-minded lady with a costly bath, gave her new, spotless silken garments, and excellent, bright and costly ornaments. They gave her food possessing all excellences and drink like nectar and spirituous liquor. Then (she saw) in a mirror herself with a wreath and with a spotless garment. The maidens performed an expiatory rite averting an evil with great reverence for her. Her form was adorned with a costly necklace,

and ornament for the neck; her form had an ornament on her breasts, bracelets and golden anklets that were jingling; she was adorned with a golden girdle, (decked) with many jewels, below her loins. Her brows were charming; her teeth were fine; her eyes with white loving glances, vied with the calyx of a lotus. Due to dark hair her face was bright. When she remembered her dear husband who was liked by the sages, she was there with the damsels where the lord of sages remained. (Seeing) herself in front of her husband and surrounded by a thousand damsels, and having heard about his knowledge of deep meditation, she was apprehensive. Then he, the devoted one and the killer of his enemies, put her who had taken a pure (i.e. a purifying) bath, who was freshly shining, who had her own (i.e. original, charming) form, whose charming breasts were covered, who was surrounded by a thousand vidyādharīs, and who had put on excellent garments, into the aeroplane. In that aeroplane, he, the very handsome one, with his greatness undiminished, accompanied by his dear wife, and with his body served by the vidyādharīs, shone like the moon in the sky, surrounded by stars, and with the multitudes of white lotuses blooming. He, the defender of those women and resembling Kubera, and praised by siddhas, enjoyed for a long time, in the troughs on the lord of the family-mountains, the place of the enjoyment of the eight guardians of quarters, charming with wind (i.e. the breezes), the friend of Cupid, and having charming sounds due to the falling into them of the celestial river. Pleased with the lady (i.e. Sukanyā) he enjoyed at (different places like) Vaiśrambhaka, the celestial garden Nandana, Puṣpabhadraka, Mānasa and Caitrarathya.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Horse Goes to Cyavana's Hermitage

Sumati said:

1-4. Thus sporting with her everywhere on the earth, he did not notice the years counted in hundreds that rolled by. Then

the brāhmaṇa, being aware of the lapse of his time, and realising that his excellent dear wife was full of (i.e. fully satisfied with) her desires (being satisfied), returned to his best hermitage which was situated on the bank of Payoṣṇī and which was crowded with foeless beings and people and resorted to by beasts. He, of an excellent penance, lived there with his disciples, endowed with (the knowledge of) the Vedas; and with his pair of feet being served (by his disciples etc.) everyday, he practised a great (i.e. severe) penance.

5-8. Then, sometime Śaryāti desired to perform a sacrifice in honour of deities. At that time he sent his servants to fetch Cyavana. Being invited by them, he, of a great penance went there along with Sukanyā, his religiously wedded wife, and greatly devoted to (proper) conduct. (The king) of a great fame, saw the best sage—a man with sun-like lustre—by the side of the sage's wife i.e. of his daughter. The king who did not give her blessings and whose mind was not very much pleased, said to his daughter who had saluted her father (i.e. him).

9-10. "What is this that you have desired to do? You who have abandoned your husband stricken by old age and are resorting to this paramour who is a wayfarer, have deceived the sage saluted by the world. How has your mind wrongly gone down (like this)? This is a family-bane to the child born in the family of the good. Since you, being shameless, are having a paramour, you are degrading the family of your father and of your husband to the lowest position."

11-14a. She, smiling a bright smile, said to her father who was speaking like this: "O father, this is your son-in-law, the son of Bhṛgu." She told her father everything about (Cyavana's) acquisition of youth and handsome form. The father, being amazed and very much pleased, embraced his daughter. A Soma sacrifice was got performed by the wise one, and he took a cup of Soma. Cyavana, endowed with power, made the Aśvins, who did not (up to then) drink Soma, have a cup of Soma.

14b-22a. Indra, (seeing) the two deities, allowed to sit in the line (of those who were served Soma), (though they were) not fit to be in the line, by Cyavana, took his thunderbolt to kill the best brāhmaṇa (viz. Cyavana). The intelligent sage, seeing Indra, holding his bolt and ready to kill him, gave out a

'hum' sound, and stupefied the arm of Indra. All men saw there Indra, whose arm was stupefied and who like a snake controlled by a charm, was breathing with anger. Indra whose arm was stupefied, praised the sage, the treasure of penance, and giving with a fearless heart a portion (of Soma) to the Aśvins, told (him): "O lord, give an oblation to the Aśvins; O Sir, I shall not prevent it; paradon me, a great sin I have committed." Thus addressed, the sage, the treasure of kindness, quickly gave up his anger. O best of men, at that time Indra's arm became free. Seeing this, all men, with their minds full of curiosity, praised the brāhmaṇa's power, difficult to be obtained (even) by gods etc. Then the great king gave much wealth to brāhmaṇas. He, the tormentor of his enemies, had the bath of purification at the end of the sacrifice.

22b-24a. Since I was asked by you to tell the great rise of Cyavana, endowed with penance and deep meditation, I have told you all about it. Having saluted this (Cyavana), an embodiment of penance, and having received (from him) blessings for victory, send him, along with his wife to the charming sacrifice of Rāma.

Śeṣa said:

24b-30a. When he was talking like this, the horse, imprinting the earth with the marks of his hoofs, due to his wind-like speed, reached the hermitage. He, eating with his mouth the dūrvā-shoots, moved into the great hermitage. When the sages had, after fetching darbhas, gone to the river to bathe, Śatrughna, the tormentor of enemies and liked by heroes, reached the extremely beautiful hermitage of Cyavana. The brave one (i.e. Śatrughna), having gone into the hermitage, saw Cyavana, being the (very) embodiment of penance, near Sukanyā; and announcing his own name, saluted his feet: "I am Śatrughna, the brother of Rāma and the protector of the (sacrificial) horse. For the appeasement of great sins, I am saluting both of you."

30b-39. Hearing these words, the best of the sages said: "O Śatrughna, O best among the heroes, may you attain prosperity. You who are protecting the (horse of the) sacrifice, will attain great fame. O brāhmaṇas, note the wonder; even

that Rāma, by remembering whose name men having committed great sins and having had sexual intercourse with others' wives, destroy their sins and the free souls engaged in remembering whose name attain salvation, is performing the (horse-) sacrifice. Due to the touch of the dust rising from his lotus-like feet, the better-half of Gautama became at once one having an enamouring form. She (i.e. Ahalyā, Gautama's wife), full of love, by meditating upon that form of Rāma burnt all the heaps of her sins and became beautiful. By seeing his charming form in the battle (even) demons reached his changeless form. Those ascetics who are devoted to meditation, on meditating upon him have gone, being fully free from the fear of the mundane existence, to the highest position. Blessed I am that today I shall see Rāma's charming face, the corners of the eyes of whom resemble the cloud-water, which has a fine nose, beautiful eye-brows and which is well high. That is (really) the tongue that respectfully utters Rāma's name. The one other than this is like the tongue of a serpent.

40-46. Today I have obtained the merit of my penance; today my desires are fulfilled because I shall see Rāmacandra's face difficult (to be seen even) by Brahmā etc. I shall purify my body with the dust of his feet; I shall purify my tongue by means of very wonderful talk (with him)." With tears flowing and his words faltering he said "Go", when love for Rāma had increased by remembering Rāma's feet. In front of the sages, he, with his eyes full of tears said: "O Śrī Rāmacandra, O best among the Raghus, O you embodiment of righteousness, O you who take pity on your devotees, emancipate me from the worldly existence." Firm in his meditation he did not feel alien there, when he talked like this before the sages. Śatrughna said to the sage: "O lord, make very pure our best sacrifice by the dust of your feet. It is the great fortune of the lord of Raghus, that he, of mighty arms dwells in your heart". Thus addressed, and very much honoured by all people Cyavana, with his attendants and surrounded by all fires, and floating in the deep pool of joy, went there (near Śatrughna).

47. Seeing that devotee of Rāma, coming there on foot, Hanūmān, full of modesty, said these words to Śatrughna:

48. "O lord, if you tell me, I shall carry this very great and

extremely handsome devotee of Rāma, the best sage to your city."

49. Hearing these important words of the warrior-monkey, Śatrughna, ordered Hanūmat: "Go, take the sage (to the city)."

50. Hanūmān put the sage on his back, and, (moving) like Wind going everywhere, took the sage along with his family.

51-54. Seeing the sage, who had arrived (at Ayodhyā), Rāma, the best among the intelligent, being pleased and agitated through affection, offered him respectful offering and water for washing his feet etc. (Rāma said:) "Now I am blessed due to having seen you, the best sage. This sacrifice of me, which is equipped with all requisites has been purified." Hearing these words, the best sage Cyavana, extremely delighted, and with his body horripilated due to love, said: "O lord, O great king, the worshipping of fire by you, the knower of Veda, and the protector of the path of dharma, is but proper."

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Arrival of a Brāhmaṇa Ascetic

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Having seen the power of the penance of Cyavana, which was inconceivable, Śatrughna praised the brāhmaṇic penance which alone was adored in the world. (He said to himself:) 'Oh! see the perfection of abstract meditation in the best brāhmaṇa who just in a moment fashioned the aeroplane difficult to have. What a great disparity is there between the complete attainment of pleasure on the part of the sages of pure hearts and the desire for enjoyment on the part of human beings without the power of penance!'

4-7. Saying thus to himself, Śatrughna stayed in Cyavana's hermitage for a while, drank water and enjoyed comfort. The great horse, having the speed of wind, having drunk the water of (the river) Payoṣṇī having auspicious water, went along the way. Seeing the horse's exit, the soldiers went after him; some

with elephants, some with foot-soldiers, some with chariots and some with horses. Accompanied by the best minister Sumati, Śatrughna followed him in a chariot drawn by a horse.

8-14. The horse that was moving on, reached the city called Ratnātaṭa belonging to a king called Vimala and crowded with happy and rich people. Having heard from his servant that the excellent horse of Rāma along with all soldiers had reached the vicinity of the city, he, along with seventy elephants having the moon's colour, myriads of horses, and a thousand chariots bright like gold, went forth to (greet) Śatrughna. Having saluted Śatrughna, and all great warriors that had come there, and having offered him riches, treasure and wealth and his entire kingdom to him, he stood before him and said: "What (should) I do?" The great king too with his arms closely embraced him who had bowed down to his feet and having entrusted his kingdom to his son and surrounded by many archers, went with him. Having heard Rāma's name, pleasing to the ears, all of them saluted the horse and offered him riches and great wealth.

15-20. With great joy Śatrughna honoured the king; and then, along with his army went after the horse. When he was thus going, he saw on his way an excellent mountain, which was adorned with crystal, golden and silver tablelands, which resounded with water-streams, the land of which had various minerals, which was adorned with good minerals like red chalk and colour of lac, where siddha-damsels having no fear from anywhere sported with siddhas, where gandharvas, celestial nymphs and nāgas were sporting with pleasure. Seeing the mountain served by cool breezes (that had been) in contact with the ripples of Gaṅgā, and charmingly graced with the sound of lutes, swans and parrots, Śatrughna, with his mind full of amazement on having seen it, said this (i.e. these words) to Sumati:

21-22. "What is this best among the great mountains? It astonishes my mind. This wonderful (mountain) having excellent tablelands of abundant silver, shines on my way. What deities dwell here? Is it the sporting ground of gods that excites my mind with the heaps of riches?"

23-37a. Hearing these words, Sumati who had set his heart on the lotus-like feet of Rāma, the abode of virtues which will be mentioned, then said: "O king, this is the mountain (called)

Nīla, which shines in front (of us) with great beautiful peaks and crystal tops on all sides. Those mean men, those sinful men, engaged in adultery, who do not realise the hosts of virtues of Viṣṇu, do not see this mountain. So also those men who having controversies and doubt in their minds, do not care for the way of conduct well settled by the good arising from the śrutis and the smṛtis, those who sell indigo, and those who sell lac do not see this (mountain). A brāhmaṇa who drinks spirituous liquor and sells ghee etc., so also he who would not give (in marriage) his daughter endowed with beauty to a man of good character and belonging to good family (do not see this mountain). (Similarly) a man who censures his wife coming from a good family and having a good character, who himself eats sweet (dishes, but) does not give them to his kinsmen (does not see this mountain). (In the same way) a man who discriminates in (i.e. while serving) food meant for brāhmaṇas, and the wicked one who does not offer mixture of rice and peas or rice boiled in milk to a suppliant (do not see this mountain). Those who torment guests (already) tormented by the sun's heat etc. (do not see this mountain). O great king, those who enjoy in the atmosphere and who are traitors, so also those who are averse to Raghunātha do not see (this mountain). This beautiful, auspicious, best mountain, adorned by Puruṣottama purifies all of us by its sight. Here lives Puruṣottama whose feet are honoured by the crowns of gods, who deserves to be seen by the auspicious ones, who grants religious merit, whom the śrutis saying 'Not this, not this' (i.e. this is not Brahman, that is not Brahman . . .) do not know, the dust of whose feet is sought after by gods like Indra and is extremely difficult to be secured, whom the wise know by means of the perfect statements of the Upaniṣads—that Puruṣottama along with Śrī lives on this Nīla-mountain. O king, having climbed it, having worshipped it with merit etc., and having eaten the offering of eatables presented to it, one becomes four-handed.

37b-48a. In this regard also they mention this ancient account. O great king, listen to it which is full of all wonder: What happened to king Ratnagrīva along with his family? (How) he obtained four hands etc. difficult to be got (even) by gods and demons? O great king, there was a city named Kāñcī,

well known in the worlds. It was rich with great people and their attendants, and (had in it) army and horses (or elephants). In it lived best brāhmaṇas who were very much engaged in the six duties,[1] who were devoted to the welfare of all beings, and who hankered after devotion to Rāma. The kṣatriyas were fighters, and never fled away in a battle. They were averse to others' wives and to plotting maliciously against others. The vaiśyas conducted themselves well with lending money, agriculture and trade. They always took delight in (i.e. were greatly devoted to) the feet of Raghunātha. The śūdras passed their nights and days in serving brāhmaṇas etc. With the tips of their tongues they always uttered (the word) 'Rāma, Rāma'. No common man committed a sin (even) mentally. Charity, pity, restraint and truth always prevailed there. No sinless person even uttered words harming others. People did not show greed for the wealth of others, nor did they commit any sin. In this way, O great king, the subjects were looked after by Ratnagrīva. The king, free from greed, accepted only one sixth part[2] (of the income of each person), and nothing else (i.e. more). In this way, the king who righteously protected his subjects and enjoyed all pleasures, passed many years.

48b-58a. Once he said this (i.e. these words) to Viśālākṣī, his chaste and religiously wedded wife: "O Viśālākṣī, sons able to protect the subjects have been born (to us). I have many attendants free from distress. My elephants resemble mountains, and my horses are (swift) like the wind. I always have chariots yoked with great horses. Due to the grace of great Viṣṇu I have nothing wanting, but (still) there is one desire in my mind. O you extremely beautiful one, I have not as yet visited a great holy place capable of putting a stop to a stay in the womb (i.e. to birth) and adorned by Viṣṇu. I have become old with my body having wrinkles and grey hair. With reverence I shall resort to a charming holy place. That man who only fills his belly (i.e. eats to live) during his life and does not worship Viṣṇu, is said to be a bull. Therefore, O auspicious dear one,

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1. Ṣaṭkarma—The six duties enjoined on a brāhmaṇa : 1. Reading (especially the Vedas), 2. Instructing, 3. Sacrifice. 4. Conducting a sacrifice, 5. Giving, 6. Receiving (gifts).

2. Ṣaṣṭhāṁśa—Cf. Manusmṛti, 7. 131ff.

with my family I shall go on a pilgrimage after having entrusted the entire responsibility of the kingdom to my son." Having resolved like this in the evening he, meditating upon Viṣṇu at night, saw a dream (and saw in it) a brāhmaṇa—an excellent ascetic. The great king, having got up in the morning and having offered the morning prayers etc., happily sat in the assembly with his ministers.

58b-65a. Just then he saw a brāhmaṇa ascetic of an emaciated body, wearing matted hair, bark-garments and a small piece of cloth worn over the privities and holding a staff in his hands, and with his body rendered auspicious due to visits to many holy places. The king of mighty arms, on seeing him, saluted him with (i.e. by bowing) his head. The king, with his mind pleased, offered him a respectful oblation and water for washing his feet. He asked (i.e. said to) the celebrated brāhmaṇa who had rested and was seated comfortably: "O lord, my bodily sin has today gone (away) due to having seen you. Great men go to the houses of the helpless ones through regard for them, to protect them. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, now tell me, an old man, as to which god would bring about the end of (living in) the womb (i.e. the end of birth and death), and which holy place would be capable of (doing so). (People like) you move everywhere, are the greatest, are devoted to concentration and meditation and have become spotless and meritorious due to having plunged (i.e. bathed) in all the sacred places. O you, who well know (about) all the holy places, favour me and tell me in detail, who am listening and having faith."

The brāhmaṇa said:

65b-82. O best king, I shall tell you what you asked me about visits to holy places. By the favour of which deity would womb i.e. birth be kept off? That Śrī Rāmacandra who destroys the mundane existence, should be resorted to. He, the lord alone, called Puruṣottama, should be worshipped. I have seen many (holy) cities destroying all sins. Ayodhyā, Sarayū, Tāpī, so also the excellent Haridvāra, Avanti, Vimalā, Kāñcī and Revā going (i.e. flowing) into the ocean; so also Gokarṇa, (the holy place) called Hāṭaka, destroying crores of murders; so also the great mountain called Mallika, giver of salvation to those men

who see it and where on the bodies the water would become dark or pure. I have seen this holy place which removes sin. I have seen Dvāravatī, which is resorted to by gods and demons, where flows the auspicious Gomatī, having Brahmanic water, where sleep is called absorption of the mind and death is said to be final liberation, and living where Kali would never be powerful. Where (i.e. there) the stones are marked with discs, and men also hold discs; beasts, insects, birds etc.—all have discs on their bodies; where the three-strided one (i.e. Viṣṇu), the only guardian of the worlds, would live (i.e. lives). Due to my great religious merit I saw that city. I saw Vārāṇasī which is made his abode by Viśvanātha and where they teach the hymn that emancipates (a person) and is called Brahman, having died where insects, moths, bees, beafts and others, and (even) gods, abandoning the pleasure due to the contact with their (i.e. as a result of their) deeds and overcoming grief go to Kailāsa. (Then there) is the holy place called Maṇikarṇi, in which the river flowing to the north cuts off the bondage of the mundane existence even of the sinners. All (of them) having matted hair, ear-rings, and adorned with serpents and excellent ones wearing the hide of an elephant live with their grief perished. There (the god) called Kālabhairava controls Yama. Lord Yama holding the (chastising) rod, does not talk about human beings. Kāśī, marked by (the presence of) Viśveśvara, was seen by me. O king, I also saw many holy places; but that great wonder which I saw on the mountain called Nīla, in the presence of Viṣṇu, was seen at no other place.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

A Miraculous Happening

The brāhmaṇa said:

1-10. O king, listen to the account (of the events) that took place on the mountain Nīla, believing which men go to the eternal Brahman. I who was wandering, went to that mountain

called Nīla, the courtyard of which is repeatedly washed by the water of the ocean. There, on the top of the mountain, I saw bhillas, holding bows, having four arms and with their fatigue removed by eating roots and fruits. Then immediately a great doubt arose in my mind: 'How (is it that) these men are having four arms and they are holding bows and arrows? Their forms appear to be (like those) who have conquered their souls and live in Vaikuṇṭha. How have they obtained what is difficult to be obtained even by Brahmā and others?' They, with their hands shining with conches, discs, maces, śārṅga (bows) and lotuses, and with their bodies covered with sylvan garlands, and resembling the devotees of Viṣṇu were near (me). With my mind full of doubt I asked them at that time, O king, (I said:) "Who are you? How have you obtained this condition of having four hands?" Then they laughed much and said to me: "This brāhmaṇa does not know the wonderful importance of piṇḍa." Hearing this, I said (to them): "What is piṇḍa? To whom is it given? Tell it to me. O you most religious ones, having bodies with four hands." Then having heard my words, the magnanimous ones told me the entire account of the acquisition of four hands etc.

The kirātas said:

11-17. O brāhmaṇa, listen to the account: A child from amongst us everyday sported, eating jambu fruits etc. Once while playing and being surrounded by children on all sides he climbed up a beautiful peak of the mountain (Nīla). (The boy said:) "There I saw a wonderful temple of a deity. It was decked with the gems like emeralds and had golden walls. Like the sun it tore off (i.e. dispelled) the line (i.e. mass) of darkness with its lustre. Seeing it I was amazed (and thought): 'What is this? Whose abode is this? Going (into it) I shall find out whether the abode belonged to the great ones.' Thinking like this, I, due to my great luck, went inside the house. There I saw the lord of gods, saluted by gods and demons, and shining with crowns, necklaces, armlets and neck ornaments etc., so also having extremely pure and charming ear-rings, and lotus-like feet with bees intoxicated with the fragrance of tulasī (-blossoms).

18-24. (I saw the lord) the rich image (of the lord) whose

feet were served by a conch, a disc, a mace, a bow, a lotus which were embodied, and who was well served by Nārada and others. (There) some sang, danced and laughed; they pleased the great, very wonderful lord who alone was saluted by the entire world." O sage, my child seeing Viṣṇu, went there. O king, gods, after having majestically offered worship with incense etc., having made an offering of eatables for the dear (lord) of Śrī, so also having waved the lights, went, expecting his grace through great respect for him, to their own abodes. Due to the great luck (of the boy,) he got a particle of boiled rice that had fallen there, and that was difficult to be got by Brahmadeva and other gods and men. The child ate it; then he saw the image; and the very handsome child had four arms. Then we repeatedby looked at the boy who had come home, who had got four arms and who had held a conch, a disc etc.

25-30. We asked him: "What is this wonder that has taken place?" Then the boy told us all the great wonder: "I had gone to the eastern peak (of the mountain). There I saw the lord of gods. There I found the charming particle of boiled rice from the offering made to the deity. Just due to eating it, I have now become four-armed, and am amazed." Having heard those words of the boy, we, who were at once amazed, also saw the god, very difficult to be obtained. We ate there food etc. full of all tastes. Then due to the lord's grace we became four-armed. O best among the Kurus, go and have a sight of the lord. O brāhmaṇa, eating the particle of boiled rice (from the offering) you (will) be four-armed. O best brāhmaṇa, I have told you about the wonder, about which you had asked me.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Ratnagrīva Goes on a Pilgrimage to Puruṣottama

The brāhmaṇa said:

1-5. Having heard the highly amazing words of the bhillas and thinking that it was a great wonder, I was delighted. Having

bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean, with my body rendered auspicious, I climbed up the peak, variegated with gems and rubies. O great king, there I saw the god saluted by gods and others. I had become blessed by saluting him and by having eaten the food (from the offering). Due to having seen the lord Viṣṇu, I obtained the four-armed condition, marked with a conch, a disc etc. (and) did not enter a womb again (i.e. did not have rebirth). O king, you too quickly go to the mountain called Nīla, and make yourself blessed and free from the agony of remaining in the womb (i.e. being born).

6. Having heard these words of the intelligent best brāhmaṇa, he, with his body delighted, asked the sage, the manner in which the pilgrimage (was to be undertaken).

The king said:

7-8. O good one, O best brāhmaṇa, O sinless one, you have nicely described to me the greatness of the lord which destroys the sins of those who listen to it. Tell me the mode of the pilgrimage, along with (i.e. as told in) the scriptures. By which mode would men obtain the entire fruit?

The brāhmaṇa said:

9-16. O king listen, I shall tell you the auspicious mode of pilgrimage by means of which the god saluted by gods and demons, is obtained. Even if one's body is wrinkled (and) grey or one is endowed with youth, one should, realising death to be insurmountable, submit oneself to Hari. One should put one's heart into narration about him, listening about him, saluting and worshipping him, and not anywhere else like woman etc. Realising that everything is perishable and momentary and very painful, a man who somehow greatly worships Viṣṇu who is beyond birth and death, to whom devotion is dear, and who is infallible, (even) through anger, desire of carnal gratification, fear, hatred or greed, does not experience unhappiness. That Viṣṇu is reached through the sinless contact with the good. That which the good, with their attachment ceased and free from desire and greed, say, keeps one away from the worldly existence. Due to their grace men become free from unhappiness. At the holy places is found

a good man highly devoted to Rāmacandra, whose sight is the fire burning the heaps of men's sins.

17-18a. Therefore, a man, afraid of the mundane existence, should always visit the holy places, having holy water and adorned with the rows of good people. The holy places, properly visited, destroy sins.

18b-20. O best king, listen to the mode (of visiting them). First a man should create in himself detachment from his wife and (other) members of his family. Knowing (all) that to be unreal, he should mentally recollect Viṣṇu. Having gone from there to a distance of a krośa uttering (the name) 'Rāma, Rāma', he should, knowing the (proper) way, having bathed at the holy places, get himself shaved.

21-23. The sins of men visiting holy places, go (with them) resorting to their hair. Therefore, one should get shaved. Then a man, free from greed and having put on the dress proper for a holy place, should hold a staff, a knotless garment, a pitcher and a piece of deer-skin. A special fruit is obtained by those men who go there according to the proper mode. Therefore, with all efforts a man should go through the rite of pilgrimage.

24-30. He whose hands, feet, and mind are well controlled, and who has knowledge, penance and fame, obtains the fruit of (a visit to) the holy places. The very lucky man, saying with his tongue 'O Hari, O Kṛṣṇa, O Hari, O Kṛṣṇa, O you to whom your devotees are dear, O you lord of senses, O you fit to be resorted to, O revered one, O Viṣṇu, protect me from the many (births in) the worldly life,' and mentally recollecting Hari, should visit a holy place on foot. A man going in a vehicle would obtain equal fruit. A man (going to a holy place) with his shoes on would obtain one fourth fruit, and the fruit obtained by killing a cow by going in a vehicle (to which) bulls (are yoked). A usurer obtains one third of the fruit, and a man gets one eighth by serving (i.e. one who serves others gets one eighth part of the religious merit). A man going to a holy place reluctantly would obtain half the fruit. A man should visit holy places properly. His sins perish, especially by observing the (proper) rites. There he should salute the good men by resorting to their feet etc. By that devotion to Hari, Puruṣottama, is secured.

31-33. Thus I have told you in brief and not in detail, the

mode of visiting the holy places. Resorting to this mode go to Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu). Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu) being pleased (with you), O great king, will give (i.e. bring about) devotion to (i.e. in) you, so that in a moment there will be the end of the mundane existence. O best man, having heard the mode of visiting holy places, which destroys all sins, a man is freed from all severe sins.

Sumati said:

34-35. The great one, having heard these words, and with his mind agitated through curiosity to see that holy place, saluted his feet, and ordered his minister, an excellent counsellor. Desiring to visit the sacred place, he decided to take all persons with him. (He said to the minister:)

36-38. "O minister, at my behest, advise all the citizens: 'The best men, who live in my city, who obey my orders, should move with me out of my city to please (Viṣṇu) by seeing the lotus-like feet of (that) Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu); but those sinful men, of irreligious intentions, who, violating my words (i.e. my order) stay (back) in their houses, should be punished with Yama's (i.e. capital) punishment.

39-42a. What is the use of that host of sons or those relatives of bad conduct who have not seen with their eyes Puruṣottama who gives religious merit? The birth of them whose sons and grandsons have not sought the shelter of Viṣṇu, is like that of a herd of pigs eating excretion. O multitudes of my subjects, quickly salute that god who by merely his name (being uttered) is capable of purifying all.'" Such charming words strung together with the virtue of the lord (were uttered by him).

42b-45. His chief minister Uttama, having the true name (i.e. true to his name), was much delighted. Having put (the announcer) on an excellent elephant he proclaimed by means (of the sound) of the drum: "Since it is ordered by the king desiring to go on a pilgrimage, all people should quickly go with the king to the great mountain. They should see there (the lord) having the name Puruṣottama and destroying sins. They should make (i.e. look upon) the entire ocean of the worldly existence (just as) a small puddle."

46-54. The minister, whose fatigue was removed by medita-

tion upon the feet of Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) made such a wonderful proclamation as ordered by the king. Hearing it, all the subjects swimming in the fluid of joy, decided to emancipate themselves by seeing Puruṣottama. Brāhmaṇas, well-dressed and accompanied by their disciples, and giving a blessing rich with boons to the king, then moved out. Brave kṣatriyas holding bows, vaiśyas graceful due to sale of objects, śūdras with their bodies delighted due to crossing the worldly existence, washermen, lovely shoe-makers, kirātas, wall-builders, those who lived on a needle (i.e. tailors), those who dealt in tāmbūla, those who kept musical instruments, those who subsisted on dyeing, the sellers of oil and the sellers of garments, bards, panegyrists, heralds full of delight and narrating old accounts moved out by the king's order. Those who knew the sweet taste of food, those who amused (others) with words causing laughter, magicians, vidyādharas, those who were proficient in intelligence, praising the great king went out of the city.

55-60. The king too, having finished the rites like the morning prayer, brought (there) the brāhmaṇa, the best ascetic and extremely pure. By his order the king went out of the city. The king, followed by people, shone like the moon with stars. He went over just a krośa, and getting himself shaved, held a staff and a water-pot, and wore an auspicious (deer-)hide. He had put on an auspicious dress and was engrossed in meditation on Viṣṇu. He, of a great glory, had his mind free from passion and anger. At that time the musicians repeatedly beat large kettle-drums, large military drums, and played upon other musical instruments, (blew) conches, and (played upon) lutes. People saying, 'O lord of gods, O you who remove grief, O you who are known as Puruṣottama, show me your body', went out (of the city).

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Importance of Gaṇḍakī

Sumati said:

1-11. Then, when the king, accompanied by all people proceeded (to Nīlagiri), he, the great king, heard on the way the narration of Kṛṣṇa, of Govinda, sung by distinguished singers, the devotees of Viṣṇu: "Victory to you, O Mādhava, O you Puruṣottama, who are fit to protect." On his way he visited many holy places and saw their greatness. From the ascetic brāhmaṇa he heard about their greatness. The king, with his mind amused with diverse accounts of Viṣṇu, made the singers sing about Viṣṇu on every path (that he took). The great, intelligent king whose senses were restrained, gave gifts to the helpless, blind, poor, lame persons, as desired by them. Very much devoted to the meditation on Viṣṇu, he, making himself auspicious and free from passion by means of visiting many holy places, went (on the pilgrimage) with his own people. The king while going saw ahead the river which destroys sins, which contained stones marked with discs, which was pure like the sages' minds, which was adorned with many rows of the hosts of many sages, which looked beautiful with the cooings of birds like the cranes. Having seen it, he asked the ascetic, the best brāhmaṇa who knew piety and who was full of the special knowledge of the significance of many holy places: "O lord, what is this auspicious river, resorted to by hosts of sages and making my heart full of joy?" Hearing these words of the intelligent king of kings, the learned (brāhmaṇa) commenced narrating the excellent significance of the holy places.

The brāhmaṇa said:

12-22. O king, this is river Gaṇḍakī which is resorted to by gods and demons, which is overflowing with holy water, and which destroys heaps of sins. She would burn mental sin by means of her sight (i.e. when she is seen), would burn the sin committed by means of deeds by to her touch, and would burn the heap of sins committed through words by means of her water being drunk. Formerly the lord of the beings (i.e. Brahmā),

seeing all the beings to be sinful, produced this (river), the destroyer of many sins from the drops on his cheeks. Those men who, even though they have committed sins, touch this river having holy water and beautiful ripples, do not obtain a womb (i.e. are not reborn). The stones found in this river and adorned with the marks of disc, are actually great forms of the lord himself. A man who would everyday worship the stone with a disc (on it), would never enter the womb of a mother (i.e. would never be reborn). An intelligent man who would (like to) worship the excellent śālagrāma stone, must be of good conduct, and free from religious hypocrisy and greed. A man averse to the wife of someone else and to the wealth of others, should carefully worship the śālagrāma with the disc (on it). The disc born (i.e. found) in Dvārāvatī and the stone born (i.e. found) in Gaṇḍakī, destroy in a moment men's sins earned during a hundred existences. Even if a man would have committed a thousand sins, he would be purified by drinking the water of (i.e. flowing from) a śālagrāma. A brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya or śūdra householder, who is on the path of the Vedas (i.e. behaves according to the Vedic injunctions), would obtain salvation on worshipping a śālagrāma.

23-27. A woman should never worship a śālagrāma. If a woman who is a widow or whose husband is alive, who desires her well-being in heaven, touches through ignorance a śālagrāma, she would, even though she is endowed with good character and virtues, be deprived of her collection of religious merit and would quickly go to hell. The best brāhmaṇas say that flowers dropped from the hands of women on śālagrāma stones are more (powerful) than the fall of Indra's thunderbolt. The sandal offered to the lord by a woman would be like poison, a flower offered by her would be like Indra's thunderbolt, and offering of eatables made by a woman to the lord would resemble the deadly poison. Therefore, a woman should, by all means, avoid touching the (śālagrāma) stone. She who touches it, goes to (and lives in) the hell as long as fourteen Indras (rule).

28-38. Even a man of a sinful conduct or having (the sin of) a brāhmaṇa's murder goes to the highest position on drinking the water of (i.e. flowing from) a śālagrāma stone. Tulasī, sandal, water, a conch, a bell, a disc, a (śālagrāma) stone, a

copper-pot and Viṣṇu's names are the nectar from (Viṣṇu's) feet. The tranquil sages, proficient in all sacred works, say that the nectar from (Viṣṇu's) feet (obtained) through these nine, burns the heaps of sins. O king, all the wonderful religious merit obtained by bathing at all places and by performing all (kinds of) sacrifices is present in each drop (of Gaṇḍakī). Within (a radius of) a yojana a crore of sacred places exist, where the śālagrāma stone is worshipped by best men. Even śālagrāma stones should be worshipped; not the double ones among the even ones. The uneven ones also should be worshipped; but not the triple among the uneven ones. (A śālagrāma with) a disc is (found) in Dvārāvatī, so also in Gaṇḍakī. Gaṅgā flows into the ocean where the two meet. The dry ones make man bereft of (long) life, prosperity and power. Therefore the glossy and of a charming form give prosperity. A man who desires a (long) life, so also a man longing for wealth (who) worships (them), obtains all (bliss) in the next world and in this world. O king, it is (only in the case) of a lucky person that he has Viṣṇu's auspicious name in his mouth, and the śālagrāma stone near him in his heart. (Even) at the time of the departing of the soul, he who has a sight of the śālagrāma stone even while relaxing, undoubtedly gets salvation.

39-44. Formerly the lord told the intelligent Ambarīṣa: "Brāhmaṇas, those who have renounced the worldly ties and smooth śālagrāma stones—these three are my forms taken by (the lord) that appear to destroy the sins of the sinners on the globe. Those sinners who (even) once censure the śālagrāma stone, are cooked in the Kumbhīpāka (hell) till deluge. The mother, the father, the groups of relatives of that foolish man who prohibits a man on the point of worshipping (a śālagrāma stone), rot in hell. He who tells (others), 'Offer the dearest worship to śālagrāma,' being blessed, quickly takes his ancestors to Vaikuṇṭha." In this case only the sages free from attachment and lust and anger tell an ancient (piece of) history:

45-54. Formerly in a country, void of piety, called Kīkaṭa, lived a man called Śabara, belonging to the pulkasa caste. He was always bent on killing beings; he again and again held his bow. He forcibly took away the life of those who desired to go on a pilgrimage. He killed many animals; he was always interes-

ted in others' wealth. He was always full of attachment etc. and of lust and anger. He who killed animals ceaselessly, roamed in a fearful forest. He was free in (i.e. he freely drew) the bowstring to which an arrow, to the tip of which poison was applied, was fixed. That hunter, dangerous to every being, and of a cruel mind, was once roaming. He did not realize that death had approached him. Yama's dark, fearful messengers, having red hair, long nails and long fangs, with nooses and mallets in their hands, holding iron chains and causing confusion, arrived (there). (They said to one another:) "(You may) fasten this sinner causing fear to every being. He never assisted any being even mentally (i.e. He never even thought of helping any being). He is always attached to others' wives, wealth, and is always given to cheating others." One said: "Therefore I shall draw out his big tongue." One said: "I shall take out his eyes" One said: "I shall cut off the hands of this sinner." Another said: "I shall cut off the ears of this wicked one."

55-61. Saying so, and gnawing their teeth, the furious messengers with weapons (in their hands) stood by the wicked one. Then one messenger took the form of a serpent and bit (him) on the foot. As soon as he was bitten, he was dead. Then those servants of Yama tied him with an iron chain, and angrily hit him with whips and struck him with mallets. (They said to him:) "O vicious one, O scoundrel, you never acted well even mentally. So we shall throw you in the Raurava hell. Fearful crows will angrily eat up your skin and flesh. (Right) from your birth you have not served Viṣṇu. You well maintained your wife and sons by cheating them. You never remembered Viṣṇu who removes sins. Therefore, by Yama's order we beating you very much shall take you (and put you on) an iron pike (or put you into) Kumbhīpāka and Raurava."

62-64a. When, after speaking thus, they desired to take him, a man, devoted to the feet of great Viṣṇu came there. That noble follower of Viṣṇu then saw the groups of the wicked (messengers of Yama) holding malicious weapons like nooses, mallets and staffs. They were ready to take (away) the pulkasa after having bound him with iron chains.

64b-70. They said (to one another): "Bind him, bind him, destroy him, tear him, break him, break him." Then that kind man,

very much devoted to Viṣṇu, having seen him, made his heart extremely compassionate towards him. (He thought to himself): 'Let this very wicked one not suffer affliction in my presence. Today only I shall free him from Yama's messengers.' Thinking thus and being full of pity for him the best sage took a śālagrāma stone and went near him. Putting the water (flowing) from his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) feet and mixed with Tulasī-leaf, he put it into his mouth and muttered the epithets of Rāma into his ear. That devotee of Viṣṇu put the Tulasī(-leaf) on his head and the (śālagrāma) stone of great Viṣṇu on his chest, and said: "Let Yama's messengers, very much given to torture, go. Let the touch of the śālagrāma stone burn the great sin."

71-78. When he spoke like this, the very wonderful attendants of Viṣṇu came to the proximity of him whose sin had gone (away) by the touch of the (śālagrāma) stone. They who had put on yellow garments, who were adorned with conches, discs, maces and lotuses, came (there) and freed him from the unassailable iron chain. Having freed that pulkasa man who had committed great sins, he said: "Why have you bound this Viṣṇu's devotee who has a respectable body? Whose orders do you who act unrighteously obey? Release this devotee of Viṣṇu. Why have you held him up?" Hearing these words, the servants of Yama said: "By Yama's order we are ready to take (away) this sinner. He has not, even mentally, helped any being. This one, having a vicious body, committing great sins like killing animals, has plundered many people going on a pilgrimage. He is always interested in others' wives, and has done the largest number of sins. Therefore, we have come to take (away) this sinful pulkasa. Why have you got him released through warriors that have suddenly arrived?"

Viṣṇu's messengers said:

79-86a. A touch of the śālagrāma stone burns (just) in a moment all that sin due to killing a brāhmaṇa and due to the murder of a crore of beings. As a particle of fire burns cotton, in the same way the name of Rāma, even if casually heard, burns sins. He, on whose head there is a Tulasī (-leaf), on whose chest there is the charming (śālagrāma) stone, and who has Rāma's name either in his mouth or ear, is released just then only.

Therefore, formerly he had held Tulasī(-leaf) on his head; he was made to hear Rāma's name, and he well held the (śālagrāma) stone on his head. By that the heap of his sins was burnt, and his body has become auspicious. He will go to the highest position which is very difficult to be obtained by sinners. Having for a myriad years enjoyed all charming pleasures there, he obtains birth in Bhārata, and having worshipped the lord of the world, he will obtain the highest place difficult to be obtained by gods and demons. The importance of the (śālagrāma) stone of (i.e. representing) Viṣṇu is not known. When seen, touched or worshipped, it removes all sins in a moment.

86b-92a. Saying so all the attendants of Viṣṇu ceased (speaking) gladly. Those servants of Yama told that wonderful (account) to the king. The devotee of Viṣṇu, solely devoted to Raghunātha, became delighted. He, being free from Yama's noose, will go to the highest position. At that time a beautiful, very wonderful aeroplane, decorated with a number of bells, came (there) from the world of gods. Having got into it, he went to heaven resorted to by very auspicious (souls). Having enjoyed many pleasures (there) he went to (i.e. was born on) the earth. Having obtained a birth in a good brāhmaṇa family in Kāśī, and having worshipped the lord of worlds he went to the highest position. He, due to the company of the good, touched the śālagrāma stone, got free from great affliction, and went to the highest place.

92b-93. O king, I have narrated to you the important account of Gaṇḍakī. Having listened to it, a man is freed from sins and obtains pleasures and salvation.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Puruṣottama Appears to the King in the Guise of an Ascetic

Sumati said :

1-3. The best king having heard this matchless importance of Gaṇḍakī looked upon himself as blessed. Having bathed and having gratified all his (dead) ancestors, the great one was delighted. Having, according to the words of the brāhmaṇa, worshipped the śālagrāma, the best king took there twentyfour śālagrāma (stones) and with affection worshipped them with such means of worship as sandal etc.

4-5. Then the king, having given gifts there, especially to the poor and the blind, started to go to the temple of Viṣṇu. Thus, in due order, he reached the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean. Having brought it within the range of his sight (i.e. having seen it), he joyfully asked the brāhmaṇa:

6. "O lord, tell me, how far is the great mountain called Nīla which is the abode of Viṣṇu and which is saluted by gods and demons."

7-10. Having, at that time, heard the important words of (i.e. uttered by) king Ratnagrīva, he (i.e. the brāhmaṇa), full of amazement, respectfully said to the king: "O king, this is the region of the mountain Nīla which is adored. Why is it giving great religious merit not seen by you (i.e. why can you not see it)?" Again and again he said: "This is the region of the Nīla mountain. How is this (i.e. how can this), the place of the residence of Viṣṇu, not seen, (not be seen) by you? Here I had bathed properly. Here I had seen the bhillas. Along this way only I had climbed up the mountain."

11-16. Hearing these words of him, the king was mentally afflicted. Making his mind eager to see the Nīla-mountain, the king said (to him): "Tell us the means by which I shall see Viṣṇu, and I shall see the Nīla (mountain)." Then hearing the words of king Ratnagrīva, the ascetic brāhmaṇa, amazed by the king, said (these) words: "O king, having bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean we should remain here as long as the Nīla (mountain) is not seen. The (praise of) the great god called Puruṣottama, and destroyer of sins, will be sung. He who has the

name 'Bhaktavatsala' (i.e. affectionate to his devotees) will quickly do favour. He, the crest-jewel of gods will not abandon (his) devotees. Many devotees have been protected by him. Therefore, O you very intelligent one, sing (the praise of) him."

17-19. Hearing these words, the king with his mind afflicted, bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean and observed a fast. "When Puruṣottama (i.e. Viṣṇu) will show favour by appearing (before me) I shall worship him and take food; otherwise I shall (follow) the vow of non-eating." Having made such a vow, he sang (songs praising) the multitude of virtues of Hari on the bank of the (confluence of) Gaṅgā and the ocean; and observed a fast.

The king said :

20-24. Victory to you who show compassion to the helpless; victory to you who remove misery, and who are called auspicious. Victory to you who destroy the suffering of your devotees; victory to you who have taken up a lovely form and who destroy the wicked. Seeing Ambarīṣa afflicted and with all his auspicious things destroyed due to the curse of a brāhmaṇa, you holding the Sudarśana disc in your hand protected him by living in his belly. He (i.e. Prahlāda) who was harassed by his father, the king of demons, was at once protected by you—when his father was seeing it having the form of Nṛsiṁha, by dropping spears, nooses, water and fire. Seeing the excellent lord of elephants whose foot had fallen into (i.e. was caught in) the mouth of an alligator and which was extremely afflicted, you, with your good heart wet with (i.e. full of) pity, mounted on Garuḍa. Then you abandoned (i.e. got down from) the bird (i.e. Garuḍa), took (your Sudarśana) disc; you whose speed causes a series of tremors in the sky are (i.e. were) sung (i.e. praised) by him (i.e. the elephant) with his life (i.e. sincerely). You liberated him from the alligator and instantly destroyed him (i.e. the alligator).

25-28. O lord, wherever your worshipper is oppressed, you take up a bodily form and protect your (worshipper) by means of your acts removing sins. O you who protect the helpless, O you whose feet are rubbed by the diamonds on the heads of the gods, O you to whom the devotees are dear, O you who burn crores of sins, O lord, grant me your vision. If this sinful person

has come to your mind (i.e. if you think about him) then, show (yourself to him). We are yours O you who are worshipped by gods and demons, your destroying the stream of sins is not forgotten by us. Those who utter your pure name, cross the entire ocean of sins. If I have remembered you, then, let me reach you, O you who remove all sins.

Sumati said:

29-31. Thus the king, singing the merits (of the lord) at night and by day also, did not have rest or comfort even for a moment. Singing (the lord's virtues), going (to his image), invoking (him), standing (by his image), he day and night said this: "O lord of grace, O Puruṣottama, show me your body." Thus the king passed five days on the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean. Then the lord of the senses, the ocean of favour, thought through compassion:

32. 'This king has become free from sins due to singing my (virtues). Let him see my greatness honoured by gods and demons.'

33-34. Then the mighty lord, thinking like this, and with his mind full of compassion, put on the apparel of an ascetic, went near the king. O great king, having gone there after putting on the apparel of an ascetic, he reached him through compassion for the devotee and the ascetic saw him.

35-42. The best king, saying, 'Salutation to Viṣṇu', saluted him. With his mind devoted to Viṣṇu, he worshipped him with respectful offerings, water for washing his feet and with a seat; (and) said: "Matchless is my luck that I have seen you. Hereafter Viṣṇu will appear before me." Hearing these words of him, the ascetic said to him: "O king, listen to what I say. By means of my knowledge, I know the past, the future, and the present. Therefore, I (shall) say something. Listen with a concentrated mind. Tomorrow, at noon, Viṣṇu difficult to be seen even by Brahmā, will appear to you. With five kinsmen of you you will reach the highest place. (Those who will reach the highest place are:) you, (your) minister, your wife, the ascetic brāhmaṇa and the good weaver named Karamba (living) in your city. With these five you will go (to Viṣṇu), saluted by Brahmā and lord of gods and honoured by gods, on this best mountain Nīla." Speaking

thus the ascetic disappeared, and was not seen anywhere. Hearing those (words of the ascetic) the king became glad and amazed.

The king said :

43. O lord, who is that ascetic that came and talked to me? He is not seen again. Where has he, giving delight to my mind, gone?

The ascetic said :

44-48. O king, due to great love for you, he, named Puruṣottama, the destroyer of all sins, with his heart attracted (by you) came (to you). Tomorrow at noon there will be (i.e. appear) a big mountain before you. Climbing it up and seeing Viṣṇu, you will be blessed.

With the torment in his heart destroyed by the flood of the nectar of these words, he obtained such (great) joy as even Brahmā did not know. At that time large kettle-drums were sounded. Lutes were played upon. Musical instruments were played upon. There was then great joy in the mind of the king of kings. Singing (the virtues of) Hari, stopping for a moment, laughing, chattering, talking, saluting, he obtained very great joy destroying all affliction.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

The Greatness of Nīla Mountain

Sumati said :

1-5. Then having passed the entire day with (i.e. in) the recollection and narration (of the glory of) Viṣṇu, at night he slept on the bank of Gaṅgā, giving a large fruit. In a dream he saw himself having four arms and holding a conch, a disc, a mace, and a bow, dancing in front of Viṣṇu with gods like Śiva with their pleasing bodies, with missiles like a disc, a mace, a conch and a lotus etc., (so also) with the excellent attendants of Viṣṇu having good bodies. Having seen (Viṣṇu) the lord of Śrī, the

talk of the world, giving whatever is desired by the (devotees') mind, and called Puruṣottama, he was amazed and obtained very wonderful joy. The very intelligent one looked upon himself as worthy of his grace. In this way the best king saw the dream. When he got up in the morning he narrated the dream that he had seen to the brāhmaṇa.

6-7a. Having heard it the intelligent brāhmaṇa, who was amazed, told (the king): "O king, that Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), called Puruṣottama, will give you (a body resembling) his own body marked with a conch, disc etc."

7b-10. Hearing this, Ratnagrīva, of a magnanimous mind, caused to give gifts to the poor as was thought fit by his mind. Having bathed at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean, having gratified his ancestors (with oblations), he, singing the multitude of the virtues of Viṣṇu, waited to have his vision. Then in the noon, large kettle-drums, high-sounding, were beaten by the strokes of the hands of gods in the sky. All of a sudden a shower of flowers fell on the head of the king.

11-13a. "O best king, you are fortunate; see (the mountain) Nīla which is within the range of your sight." When the king heard these words uttered by the god, that great moutain, called Nīla which was wonderful and had greater brilliance than that of a crore suns, came within the range of the sight of the king.

13b-16a. On all sides it was shining with silver and golden peaks. 'Is it fire that is burning? Is it another sun? Is it the mass of lightning, which has suddenly obtained a steady lustre?' (Such were the reactions of those who saw it.) The ascetic brāhmaṇa having seen the very beautiful peak of the mountain told the king: "This is the auspicious great mountain." Hearing it the best king saluted (the mountain) by (bowing) his head.

16b-18. (He said:) "I am lucky, I am contented (that) (the mountain) Nīla has come within the range of my sight." O best man, the minister, the king's wife, the weaver Karamba also became glad on seeing Nīla. Hearing the big sounds of the large kettle-drums made by gods, the five went up the mountain at the triumphant time.

19-27. On the highest peak, adorned with variegated trees, he saw a matchless temple built in gold. Coming there always Brahmā worships Viṣṇu. Seeing an excellent, pure temple of

Viṣṇu at the place where he made an offering of eatables giving pleasure to Viṣṇu, he, surrounded by the five followers, entered it. Seeing there (the lord) charming with four arms, waited upon by the fierce and very fierce Jaya and Vijaya etc. and shining on the golden throne variegated with big gems, the king with his wife and accompanied by his servants, saluted him. The great king having saluted the best god and the highest soul, bathed him to the accompaniment of hymns proper for the bath and mentioned in the Vedas. The king with a pleased mind offered him an oblation and water for washing his feet. Then the king besmeared the lord's image with sandal, and offered two good garments. He offered (to the image) incense, waved a light and offered to the lord's image an offering of eatables fully sweet and charming. Having saluted him, he praised him by a number of hymns according to his intellect, in which a number of his virtues were strung by the ascetic brāhmaṇa.

The king said :

28-36. Puruṣa is actually one. The lord is beyond Prakṛti. He is different from effect and cause, and is worshipped by the principles like Mahat. Brahmā clever in creation was born from the lotus in your navel. Similarly, Rudra, the destroyer, was born from your eye. Ordered by you, he does all the activities about the world. The world, immovable, has come up from you, the ancient one. Having entered the power of consciousness you make him aware. O lord of the world, you do not have a birth (i.e. origin), nor do you have an end. O mighty one, growth, decay and change do not at all exist in you. Yet, for protecting your devotees and for establishing dharma, you do the acts like birth, having befitting excellences. Taking the form of a fish, you killed demon Śaṅkha. O Brahman, O ancestor of the great Puruṣa, you protected the Vedas well. Śeṣa does not know your greatness, nor does the great goddess Sarasvatī know it; then what about people like me of bad thoughts, O great Viṣṇu? (Even) this great goddess Vāk (i.e. Sarasvatī) does not mentally obtain you (i.e. is unable to conceive you). Then, O lord, how shall I be able to praise you?

Having praised him like this, he repeatedly saluted him by

(bowing) his head. His voice was faltering and his body was horripilated due to joy.

37. Viṣṇu, whose mind was pleased by means of this eulogy, said (these) significant words to the king :

The lord said :

38-40. O king of great intelligence, I am highly delighted by your praise. O great king, know me to be beyond Prakṛti. Quickly eat the charming offering of eatables. (Then) having obtained four arms, you will go to the highest position. I shall also make my appearance, giving enjoyments and salvation, to that man who will praise with the gem of eulogy (with which you praised me).

41-47. Having heard these words uttered by the lord, the king, along with his four dependents, ate the offering of eatables (made to the lord). Then an aeroplane, which was adorned with a mass of bells, which was waited upon by celestial nymphs, and which was full of all pleasures, came (there). The pious king, seeing (Viṣṇu) named Puruṣottama, saluted his feet (as) he was made the recipient of his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) favour. When he (i.e. the lord) was observing, he, with his wife, getting into the aeroplane, went to the wonderful Vaikuṇṭha in heaven. The king's excellent minister, very much devoted to piety, knowing all modes of behaviour, and waited upon by a bevy of women, went with (the king) by the aeroplane. The ascetic brāhmaṇa who had bathed at all the holy places obtained four arms and went with gods going in an aeroplane. O great king, Karamba too obtained the vision (of the lord) due to his merit (collected) through singing and reached the abode of the god, difficult to be reached (even) by all gods.

48-52. All (the five) having four arms, and holding conches, discs, maces and lotuses went to the very wonderful world of Viṣṇu. All of them had the splendour of clouds, were pure, had shining lotuses in their hands. With their bodies adorned with necklaces, armlets and bracelets, they went to the heaven. Seeing the rows of their aeroplanes, the people and the subjects made the sound of large kettle-drums in such a way that it may be perceived (i.e. heard) by ears. Then there was a brāhmaṇa, who loved

the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu. He, with his heart distressed by separation from them, went (after them), and became four-armed. The people, seeing that wonder, praised that great prosperity, and, having bathed in the water at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean, went (back) to the city.

53-60. (They exclaimed:) "Oh, the (great) fortune of king Ratnagrīva, of a good mind! With this body (of him, i.e. without casting his body), he went to the highest place of Viṣṇu." O king, this Nīla mountain is honoured by Viṣṇu (himself). On seeing it (men) certainly go to Vaikuṇṭha, the highest destination. He who listens to this greatness of Nīla, is (indeed) fortunate. (He and) he who narrates it to people, both would go to the highest place. Having heard this a bad dream perishes just by remembering (it); and in the end Viṣṇu grants him (help to) cross the mundane existence. He who stays at the Nīla (mountain) is Rāma, Viṣṇu (himself). Sītā is actually the great Lakṣmī, the cause of causes. He whose name is prescribed in (i.e. as) the expiation for the murder of a brāhmaṇa, will, after performing the horse-sacrifice, purify the worlds. Now your horse has reached the vicinity of the Nīla mountain. O you highly intelligent one, salute god Viṣṇu; thereby we shall be sinless and shall go to the highest position. By his favour many have crossed this ocean of worldly existence.

61-63. When he was talking like this, the horse, striking against the earth with the speed of the wind, reached the Nīla mountain. Then the king also, going after him, reached and bathed at the confiuence of Gaṅgā and the ocean. He sang (the praise of) Viṣṇu. That destroyer of the enemies, having praised and saluted the lord of gods, saluted by gods and demons, regarded himself as having become blessed.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

Damana Fights with Pratāpāgrya

Śeṣa said:

1-4. The horse, having a chowrie (on his head), having the speed of mind, surrounded by a line of the heroes, bearing a note on his forehead, protected by the great hero Śatrughna, by king Lakṣmīnidhi, by Puṣkala, Ugravāha and Pratāpāgrya went to the city Cakrāṅkā protected by Subāhu. O lord, he was protected and followed by many crores of warriors. At that time his great (i.e. Subāhu's) son, Damana, who had gone ahunting, saw the horse with a note on his forehead and besmeared with sandal etc.

5-7. Seeing (the horse), he said to his servant: "Whose horse is seen by me? Why has he got a note on his head, so also a beautiful chowrie?" Hearing these words of the king, the servant then went from there to the place where the well-decorated horse with a note on his forehead stood. Having seized him, decorated with a jewelled necklace, by his hair (i.e. his mane) he took him in front of the king of the supporter of the Subāhu family.

8-12. He read the note having beautiful letters: "There was king Daśaratha, the powerful lord of Ayodhyā. Rāmabhadra, the crest-jewel of all the brave men, is his son. There is no other person having valour like his son. There is no other person having valour like him in archery on the earth. He has released his horse besmeared with sandal etc. Righteous Śatrughna, killer of the warriors of his enemy, is protecting him. Those (who think) 'We are brave warriors; we have bows in our hands' should forcibly seize the horse adorned with a jewelled necklace. Śatrughna, the crest-jewel of all heroes will free him. Otherwise let the archers bow down at his feet."

13-18. Knowing the import, the king's son said: "Rāma alone is an archer. We are not considered to be kṣatriyas! What is this great pride on the earth when my father is living on the earth? Let him obtain the fruit of his pride through the arrows discharged by me. Today let my sharp arrows really render Lakṣmaṇa like a blooming kiṁśuka tree with his body

covered with wounds; and let my arrows split the temples of his elephants. Let them see the hundreds of horses covered with streams of blood. Let the groups of (the female attendants of Durgā called) Yoginīs drink the blood from the heads of men. Let the female jackals be pleased with eating the dead bodies of my enemies. Let his good (i.e. brave) warriors observe the great power of me, discharging crores of arrows released from my bow."

19-20. Having spoken like this, that prominent son of the king, named Damana, sent him to his own city, and said to his general: "To ward off the host of enemies keep ready for me a limited army, O you very intelligent one." When the fierce one made the army ready and stood facing the battle, (just) then the followers of the horse came (there).

21-28. They who were repeatedly confounded, asked one another: "Where is the great king's horse, marked with a note on his forehead?" Just then, the hero Pratāpāgrya saw in front of him the army that was ready and that was resounding with the sounds (made) by the heroes. At that time some people said: "O king, (your) horse is taken (away) by this one (i.e. by Damana). Otherwise, how would he, followed by the army of heroes stand facing (you)?" Hearing these (words), Pratāpāgrya sent his servant (to Damana). Having gone there, he asked (him): "Where is the horse of king Rāma? Who has taken it? Where has he taken it? Does the fool not know Rāma, having made an offering to whom gods led by Indra have well bowed (before him). The large army of that righteous king, being angry, will fully destroy (him) if he does not salute him." Hearing (these words) spoken (by the servant), the mighty and wicked son of the king reproached with a mass of words.

29-32. (He said:) "I have brought the sacrificial horse adorned with such marks as the note etc. Those who are brave may free him by conquering me now with force." The servant, having heard those words, was full of anger, and he, laughing, went (back). He told the king as narrated properly (above). Hearing it, the very mighty Pratāpāgrya, with his eyes red due to anger, went to fight with the king's son, followed by great heroes. The mighty one went in a chariot made of gold, shining

with four horses, having a good (i.e. strong) pole to which the yoke was fixed, and filled with all (kinds of) missiles.

33-36. Accompanied by a great army, he made the twang of his bow. Again and again he laughed loudly, causing tears to be shed through anger. The horse-riders, elephant-riders, with their hands glittering with swords followed that Pratāpāgrya whose eyes were full of tears due to anger. The elephants, the foot-soldiers in crores, ready for the fight, desired for a long time the fight waged by the hero. Then having come to know that the enemy's army was ready, the king's son, the best among the heroes, and surrounded by a huge army, advanced.

37-45. The young (prince), having taken a sword and a bow, sportively went to fight as a lion (approaches) a herd of elephants. Then the warriors, skilled in the act of fighting, being very angry, and desiring to kill one another, said: "Cut (him) off; break (him)". The foot-soldiers (fought) with the group of foot-soldiers; the elephant-riders (fought) with the warriors (on elephants); those who had got into chariots (fought) with those who were in chariots; the horse-riders (fought) with those who were seated on horses. The elephants were cut off, and were divided into two. The horses also were split up into two. The earth was filled with many human heads. Then that very mighty Pratāpāgrya who was very angry, having seen the prince ready to destroy his army, said to his charioteer: "Take the horses (i.e. the chariot) to that place where that great warrior, that prince, is engaged in the destruction of my army." Then the brave prince whose feet were bowed by the jewels of the heads of the heroes, confronted Pratāpāgrya. Pratāpāgrya's charioteer took his horses to that place where the hero Damana, the crest-jewel of all the brave, stood. Standing in the chariot nourished (i.e. adorned) with gold, and holding a bow he went to the prince ready to fight, and challenged him:

46-50. "O prince, O child, you have tied up the best horse. You do not know the great king (Rāma) who is served by all best heroes, whose wonderful valour even the lord of the demons (i.e. Rāvaṇa) could not bear. Having taken his horse, you went to your house. Know me, your enemy, of the form of death, who have come to your city. O child, leave the horse, and play a child's game. Whose son are you? Wherefrom do you come?

How have you—a short-sighted one—seized the horse? O child, pity for you has arisen in me." Having heard this, Damana, of a large heart, smiled, and, looking down upon the power of Pratāpāgrya, said to him:

Damana said:

51-52. I tied the horse forcibly, and took him to my city. O you very powerful one, I shall not give (back the horse). With life (i.e. if you live) fight (with me). About what you told me that I am a child and I should go and play, (I say), O great king, see my play in the battle.

Śeṣa said:

53-60. Speaking like this he took up his bow with the string. He, born from one having strong arms, discharged a hundred arrows on the chest of Pratāpāgrya. Having fixed a hundred arrows on his bow, the valourous one blew a conch. Due to that sound of the conch, the timid were frightened. He struck at his chest with a hundred arrows. Dexterous Pratāpāgrya cut off the good (i.e. sharp) arrows. Seeing the arrows cut off, and getting angry, the powerful son of the king discharged sharp arrows having heron feathers (attached to them). Curved arrows, bearing their names, and beautiful with sharp edge and falling (down), were seen in the sky and on the ground. The arrows sticking to his arms and chest produced many fire-particles and burnt the army. It was a great (tragedy). The very angry Pratāpāgrya, saying 'Wait, wait', struck him on the head with arrows, ten in number. Those arrows stuck into the forehead of the prince. O sage, they shone there like ten branches of a tree.

61-67. The high-minded one was not afflicted by being struck by the arrows, like a seven-year old elephant struck by sticks. Having fixed three hundred auspicious arrows with their feathered parts decked with gold, and resembling the fire of Śiva, on his bow he discharged them. Those arrows pierced the chest of Pratāpāgrya and being besmeared with blood, he went down like those who are averse to the devotion of Rāma. Pratāpāgrya got very much angry, and discharging thousands of arrows quickly, deprived Subāhu's son of his chariot that

moment (only). With four (arrows) he killed his four horses; with two (arrows) cut down his flag. With one (arrow) he caused to fall down on the ground the charioteer's head from his body. Again with four (arrows) he struck the king's son. At that moment only he cut off with one (arrow) the bow along with its string. The large-minded one got into another chariot adorned with gems of horses and taking a bow in his hand he made it ready.

68-80. He said to Pratāpāgrya: "O good hero, you have shown a wonderful valour. Now see the superiority of my bow." Saying so, Damana took ten arrows; and with four (arrows) killed the four horses. With four he cut the chariot with its wheels into (pieces of the size of) sesamum (seeds). With one he pierced his chest, and with one he (pierced) his charioteer. Blowing his conch he roared and with the sound of the conch he honoured his deed (saying): "Well (done), O hero, O you of great power." Thus seeing the valour, Pratāpāgrya, with anger got into another chariot and went to fight with the prince. (He) said (to him:) "O hero, see my wonderful valour." Saying so he quickly discharged a volley of arrows with whetted joints. Everywhere, on (the bodies of) elephants and horses arrows were seen. Going into the space they occupied every place like the highest Brahman. The brave and great one, delighting his own hosts and making his enemies very much dejected, and (even) lose their life, quickly covering the prince with crores of sharp arrows, roared. The mighty and very powerful prince, seeing himself completely covered with masses of sharp arrows, got angry and he of an endless valour took up weapons; and he shaking the bow on his arms, and with his eyes red due to anger, discharging arrows, tearing the enemies, cut off all the missiles and weapons (of his enemy). Having destroyed that mass of weapons, the prince said to him: "O respectable one, if you are (really) brave, pardon me for this one stroke. O brave one, listen to my solemn declaration made by me through pride: "Let me have that sin, drowning me into the ocean of hell, of those arrogant ones, clever in disputation, who censure the Veda, if with this (one) stroke I would not knock you down from your chariot."

81-88. Speaking like this, he drew out from the quiver an excellent sharp arrow resembling death, full of a series of flames, and placed it on his bow. That arrow resembling in effulgence the destructive fire at the end of the world, and aimed at the chest (of Pratāpāgrya), was discharged by the excellent (son of the) king. It speedily reached him. Pratāpāgrya, seeing the arrow on the point of knocking him down fixed sharp arrows on his bow to cut off that arrow. That arrow cutting off all the arrows in the middle reached Pratāpāgrya's heart endowed with courage. The arrow stuck his chest and entered his heart. The king (thus) struck fell down on the ground. His charioteer, seeing him in a swoon and unconscious and fallen from the driving box on the ground, took him and carried him away from the battle (-field). There was a very loud wailing, the army was baffled and went where (their chief) named Śatrughna, surrounded by crores of brave men, stood. The king's son (i.e. Damana) having obtained victory after vanquishing Pratāpāgrya, waited for king Śatrughna.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

Puṣkala Defeats Damana

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Śatrughna who was overpowered with anger, was grinding his teeth, shaking his hands, repeatedly licking his lip with his tongue, again and again asked them: "Who has taken (away) my horse? Who has vanquished Pratāpāgrya, the crest-jewel of all the heroes?" Then the servants said: "Damana, Subāhu's son, and the killer of his enemies, conquered Pratāpāgrya and has taken aways the horse."

4-10. Hearing this, viz. that his enemy Damana had taken (away) the horse, he speedily came to (the spot) where the battle had taken place. There Śatrughna saw (his) elephants that were (once) haughty due to rut, with their cheeks torn and merging in the water (i.e. pool) of blood. That very angry, brave Śatru-

ghna saw his horses wounded and dead along with their riders. That killer of the enemies seeing his men, chariots and elephants completely vanquished was extremely angry as the ocean at the time of final deluge (is agitated). Seeing before him that preeminent Damana who had, after belittling his army, taken away the horse and had vanquished Pratāpāgrya, the king, with his eyes full of anger, said to his warriors: "Who is here (among the warriors) that would conquer Damana, wielding all (kinds of) weapons and missiles, and who, being fearless, will vanquish with a missile the brave prince skilled in fighting?"

11-17. Hearing these words, (Bharata's son) Puṣkala, the killer of (his) enemies, ready to conquer Damana, said these words: "O lord where is this Damanaka, and where is your unlimited army? (i.e. what a great disparity is there between the two?) Due to your valour I shall conquer (him); O highly intelligent one, here I go. When I the servant, remain (here) to fight (with the enemy), who will take (away) the horse? This valour of Raghunātha will do every act. O lord, listen to my solemn declaration which will give you joy. In the battle I shall conquer Damana skilled in fight. If I would not conquer Damana, let me incur that sin incurred by those who are deprived of the tasting of the honey from the lotuses in the form of the feet of Rāmacandra. I would have that sin which that son who (first) looking upon his mother's feet as a holy place (later) goes against her, if I do not conquer Damana. Today let the king's son (i.e. Damana), with his huge chest pierced by my arrow, adorn the earth by his lying (there) in the battle."

Śeṣa said:

18-24. Having heard this solemn declaration of Puṣkala, (Śatrughna) perpetuating the family of Raghu, was glad at heart; and the brilliant one ordered (him) to fight. Being ordered (by Śatrughna), he (i.e. Puṣkala) surrounded by a large army went there where the prince Damana, born in the family of the brave, stood. Knowing him to have come to the battlefield, the best among the heroes, surrounded by his army, went forth to him. The two seated in their chariots and looking graceful in them, encountered each other (and looked as if) Indra and a demon had come to the battlefield to fight. Puṣkala said to that very

mighty prince: "O prince Damana, know me to be the mighty son of Bharata, and to have come to fight (with you) with (i.e. after having made) a solemn declaration; and O best one, know me to be known by the name Puṣkala and having the sweet vow of always serving the feet of Raghunātha. O you very intelligent one, I shall conquer you by means of a multitude of weapons. Be ready (to fight with) me)."

25-28. Having heard these words, Damana, the killer of enemies, an orator, fearless and one whose valour was noticed, laughed and replied: "Know me to be Damana, Subāhu's son, with my sin removed due to my devotion to my father, and to have taken (away) the horse of king Śatrughna. Victory is brought about by destiny. He whom destiny adorns, will have it. Observe my might in the battle." Speaking in this way, he fixed an arrow on his bow, stretched it up to his ear, and discharged sharp arrows that took away his enemies' life.

29-31. The arrows, getting darkish, covered the sky where the brilliance of the sun's rays was put off by the shadow of the arrows. The line of arrows that had stuck to the wall-like temples of the elephants adorned (them) like variegated colours of minerals. Men, horses, elephants and chariots, struck by the volley of arrows of (i.e. discharged by) the king, were seen to have fallen there.

32-39. Puṣkala, the killer of the enemies, having seen his valour and having seen the battlefield covered with the shadow of arrows fixed an arrow accompanied with hymns sacred to Agni on his bow. Having sipped water according to the proper rite, he discharged the arrow. Then there on the battlefield fire appeared. Touching the sky with its flames it rose like the fire at the time of the deluge. Then his army was tormented and was frightened on the battlefield. Being oppressed by the flames of fire, it took to heels. The (crescent) moon-like umbrellas of the archers were burnt and appeared to have the lustre of silver. The enemies' horses, burnt at their (i.e. with their) manes (burnt), ran away. The chariots also, along with good drivers' seats, were burnt. Camels, carrying gems like rubies, and troubled by series of flames as in a crematory, ran (away). At some places elephants died; at some place riders of horses perished; at places footsoldiers with their bodies burnt by fire perished.

40-45. All the arrows discharged by the prince perished. They were reduced to ashes by the arrows (discharged with the accompaniment) of (hymns sacred to) fire. Then, Damana, knowing the use of all missiles, with his mind full of anger, took the missile called Varuṇa, when his army was (thus) burnt. He discharged the missile (to the accompaniment) of (hymns sacred to) Varuṇa to pacify the fire. It submerged all his army full of chariots and horses. The chariots of the enemies were seen to be submerged in the water. Elephants also were inundated. His own (elephants) had become calm. The fire that was discharged through the 'fire-missile' had died. His own army, oppressed by the flames of fire, became peaceful. The enemies trembled and made sounds by drawing in breath due to the cold water, and struck by shower of hail and troubled by wind.

46-52. Then seeing his own army troubled by flood of water, and shaken, agitated, fled and removed by the Varuṇa (missile), Bharata's son Puṣkala, with his eyes red due to great anger, fixed a great arrow, the 'wind-missile' on his bow. Then there was great (i.e. strong) wind propelled by the wind-missile. It speedily, destroyed the dense army that was present there. The serpents shaken by the wind struct one another. The horses also along with their riders struck one another. Men shaken up by the wind, had their hair loose, were lustreless, and were seen to be falling like vampires that had come to the earth. The prince, seeing that his army was overpowered by wind on all sides, fixed the 'mountain-missile' on his bow. Then mountains fell on the heads of those who were fighting. They covered the wind; and it did not stir anywhere.

53-60. Puṣkala fixed (the arrow) called Vajra on his bow. Those (enemies) cut off by Vajra in a moment became reduced to the size of sesamum-seeds. (That missile called) Vajra reducing mountains to particles, and with its shafts accompanied by a hymn, heavily fell, with a loud sound on the chest of the prince. He the strong hero, with his mind confounded and struck on the chest and heavily wounded was pained and was very much dejected. The prudent charioteer, seeing the prince dejected in mind, took him away from there to a distance of a krośa. Then the prince's warriors fled and ran away. Having gone to the city, they told (people there) about the prince being in a state of

dejection of mind. The righteous Puṣkala having thus secured victory in the battle and remembering the words of Rāma was not able to (i.e. did not) strike again. Then there was the loud sound of the large kettledrums. There was a huge cry of victory. Charming words like 'Well (done), Well (done)' proceeded there. Seeing Puṣkala victorious that Śatrughna was glad. Surrounded by ministers like Sumati, he praised (Puṣkala).

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

Subāhu Gets Ready with His Army in the Krauñca Array

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Then, seeing his warriors with their bodies covered with streams of blood, the king was not happy. He grieved; and asked them about the movements of his son (Damana): "Tell me his entire act. How did he take away the excellent horse? Tell me also how much army (the enemy has)? How many heroes came there to fight? How did my hero Damana, intent on fighting with the enemy's army, fight and someone, having conquered this invincible hero, destroyed him."

4-17. Having heard these words of the king, those servants of him, wearing garments wet with blood (oozing) from their bodies, said: "O king, having seen the horse adorned with marks like the note etc. I got it seized through pride and belittling the best of Raghus. Then the follower (i.e. the protector) of the horse, surrounded by a small army, came (there). And a fierce and thrilling fight took place with him. When your son, having, made him swoon with his own arrows, stood there, Śatrughna, surrounded by his large army came there. Then a great battle accompanied by (i.e. in which) weapons and missiles (were used), ensued. Your very mighty son became victorious many times. O king, now, having discharged a missile, the son of Śatrughna's brother has made your brave son swoon in the battle." Hearing these words, (the king) full of anger and grief had his body

covered (with bravery) like the ocean on the parvan-day. With his lips throbbing due to anger, (gnawing) his teeth with this teeth, licking his lips with his tongue, and emaciated due to grief, he said to his general: "Keep my army ready in the vicinity (of Śatrughna's army). I shall fight with Rāma's brave soldiers who have harmed my son. Today I shall, with sharp arrows, overthrow him who has troubled my son, (even) if the great lord will protect him. The general, having heard these words spoken by the king of mighty arms, did like that (i.e. as he was ordered), and himself became ready. He reported to the king that the army which consisted of four divisions, and resembled the army of Death, had killed crores of wicked people. Having heard the words of his general, Subāhu, the killer of his enemies, went out to that place where Śatrughna who had troubled his son, stayed. (He went there) with elephants intoxicated by rut, with horses having the speed of mind, with chariots full of all weapons and missiles and conquering the enemy.

18-26. At that time, due to the great weight of the army, the earth quaked. As the army was moving on, there was a great hustle and bustle. Seeing the king to have moved out in a chariot with its parts made of gold, Śatrughna's army, (capable of) striking all enemies, became ready. His brother Suketu, skilled in mace-fight, and full of (i.e. endowed with) all weapons and missiles quickly came there by a chariot. The king's son, Citrāṅga, skilled in all (types of) battle, quickly went in his own chariot to the furious army of Śatrughna. His younger brother known as Vicitra, skilled in various (modes of) fight and afflicted by his brother's grief, went in his golden chariot. Other brave warriors, skilled in the use of all weapons and missiles, being ordered by the king, went to the battle full of warriors. King Subāhu angrily came to the battlefield. He (there) saw his son in a swoon (due to being) hit by an arrow. Seeing his unconscious son named Damana lying in the driving box, the king again and again became grieved and fanned him with twigs. The brave hero, knowing (the use of) great missiles, sprinkled with water and touched by the king with a delicate hand, slowly regained consciousness.

27-30. He got up (and said:) "Where is my bow? Where has Puṣkala, after having got ready (to fight) and being hurt

by my arrow, gone after having left the battle?" Hearing these words uttered by his son Subāhu was extremely glad and embraced his own son. Damana with his body wounded by rows of missiles, on seeing his father, bowed his neck (i.e. head) and devoutly fell at his feet. The king skilled in (various) acts of fight put back his son into the chariot, and said to the general:

31-35. "Arrange the military array called Krauñca, invincible to the enemy, entering which I shall conquer the army of king Śatrughna." Hearing those words of king Subāhu, his general arranged the special type of military array called Krauñca, which the very mighty groups of enemy, holding hosts of weapons did not enter all of a sudden. At its mouth (i.e. entrance) Suketu stood; at the throat (a hero) called Citrāṅga remained; at the two sides stood two princes, and at the tail the king (himself) stood. In between his huge army looked splendid with its four divisions. Having made the Krauñca array, the general informed the king of having arranged it. The king, having seen his army that was ready (for the action), and the well-formed Krauñca-array, decided to fight with the warriors present in Śatrughna's army.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

A Fierce Fight Between Lakṣmīnidhi and Suketu

Śeṣa said:

1-2. Seeing that army like a cloud of a fearful size, and surrounded by many elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers, Śatrughna spoke thus to Sumati in serious words. Waited upon by learned men knowing many words and ideas.

Śatrughna said:

3-6. O Sumati, whose city has reached my best horse? I see this army resembling the ripples of an ocean. Whose army is this which is endowed with four divisions, is very joyful, and appears before (me) standing with eagerness to fight? Properly

tell all this to me who am asking you, knowing which I shall order my soldiers to take position for the fight.

Hearing these words, Sumati, of an auspicious mind, being pleased, said to Śatrughna, the tormentor of his enemies.

Sumati said:

7-11. O king, in the vicinity there is an auspicious city (called) Cakrāṅkā, in which there are sinless persons due to their devotion to Viṣṇu. This Subāhu, most familiar with the religious law, and the lord of that city, is present, surrounded by sons and grandsons, before you. He is always attached to his own wife and is averse to another man's wife. Viṣṇu's story revealing the highest object, dwells in his ears. The king does not take more than a sixth part of the wealth of another person (i.e. any person is his kingdom). He, the religious one, worships brāhmaṇas with the same devotion with which he worships Viṣṇu. Having the vow (of drinking) the honey from the lotuses of the feet of Viṣṇu, he is always engaged in serving him. He is devoted to his own duty; he is averse to another's way of life.

12-14a. The army of no other heroes is like his army. Hearing about the defeat of his son, he, being full of grief and endowed with his four-divisioned army, he is present (here) to fight. You also have these many heroes like Lakṣmīnidhi. With the host of their weapons, they will conquer the enemy. Order them who are well-disposed to you.

14b-21a. Hearing those words, Śatrughna said to his excellent heroes whose minds were full of great joy due to the battle having come near: "Subāhu's soldiers have today arranged the Krauñca array. His heroes have taken position at its opening and sides. Who, knowing (the use of) weapons, will break through it? He who has the power to break through it, or is eager for victory should take up this gauntlet from my lotus-like hand." Then the hero Lakṣmīnidhi took up (the gauntlet) to break the Krauñca(-array). He, surrounded by many heroes, knowing (the use of) all weapons and missiles, said (these) words: "O king, I shall go to break through the Krauñca(-array). Formerly, Bhārgava (i.e. Paraśurāma) broke

through the Krauñca(-mountain). (Now) I (shall do) like (him)." Then he said to another hero: "Who will go with him?" Then Puṣkala made up his mind to go after him. Riputāpa, Nalaratna, Ugrāśva, Vīramardana—all (these) went by Śatrughna's order to break through the Krauñca(-array).

21b-27a. Great Śatrughna, seated in a chariot, having all (kinds of) weapons, and surrounded by many soldiers, followed him. At that time the two oceans with big waves and ready to destroy the world appeared to be agitated. Then big kettle-drums from both armies were beaten. At every place were heard the war-drums and sounds of conches. The horses neighed and the elephants trumpeted very much. The best heroes gave out 'hum' sounds. The fellies of the chariot-wheels made a sound. There on the battlefield many angry warriors who were brave and very proud of the might of their arms were seen saying (to one another): "Cut (him off); break (him)." When both the armies of Śatrughna and his enemy were thus ready to fight, Lakṣmīnidhi said to Suketu who was at the opening (of the array):

Lakṣmīnidhi said:

27b-31a. Know me to be the son of Janaka, known as Lakṣmīnidhi, skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, and proficient in fighting. Release the horse of Rāmacandra, the destroyer of all demons. Otherwise, pierced by my arrows you will go to Yama's abode.

Hastening suddenly to the best hero who was speaking like this, Suketu made his bow ready and discharging arrows quickly became steady. Those arrows had sharp joints; had their feathered parts made of gold; they were difficult to be put up with; they were seen to pervade (everything) in the battle.

31b-40. Having speedily destroyed that volley of arrows, Lakṣmīnidhi stretched his bow and discharged at his chest six sharp arrows charming with whetted joints. Those arrows were seen to have gone down to the earth after having pierced the heart of the brother of the strong-armed one; they were smeared with blood and were stained. With his chest pierced by his arrows, Suketu, who was full of anger, struck him with twenty sharp arrows

with their joints curved. Both were seen by the soldiers to have their bodies pierced with arrows, covered with blood like the kiṁśuka (trees) full of flowers. The two who were discharging crores of arrows, who were fixing (on their bows) quickly(-going) arrows, who were dexterous and mighty, were (i.e. could) not (be) distinguished by any one. They had coiled (i.e. bent) their good bows, they were showering (their enemy) with the stream of arrows, and were like new clouds executing Indra's order. Their arrows were just seen to behead elephants, horses and brave men, but were not seen when they were fixed on the bow or discharged. By them having bows and arrows in their hands and biting their lips through anger, the earth was filled with great warriors having diadems and rings. Between the two, knowing (the use of) all weapons and missiles, and fighting proudly, a fierce, great battle, causing wonder (even) to the gods, took place. A great battle, piercing crores of warriors, took place. Nobody at no place saw (i.e. could see) the sky in (i.e. due to) the net of arrows.

41-63a. At that time brave Lakṣmīnidhi who destroyed his enemies, fixed sharp, strong arrows, eight in number, on his bow. With four arrows the hero killed the horses of Suketu; and laughing he quickly cut off the very lofty flag (of his chariot). With one he knocked down on the ground the charioteer's head from his body. He, full of anger, cut off, with one (arrow) the (enemy's) bow along with the string. The swift king, with one (arrow) pierced the chest of Suketu. Seeing that wonderful deed, heroes were astonished. (Suketu) whose bow was cut off, who was without a chariot, whose horses and charioteer were killed, took up a big mace and approached (his enemy) with a desire to fight. Seeing him, skilled in mace-fighting, to have approached, he got down with a mace (in his hand) from (his) chariot. Lakṣmīnidhi, who was very angry, took a big mace fully made of iron and variegated with gold (i.e. bright) and full of all charm, hastily struck that mace resembling the fire of the thunderbolt on the chest (of Suketu). O great sage, that hero (though) struck by the mace, did not shake like an intoxicated elephant struck with garlands by a child. Then that best hero said to Lakṣmīnidhi: "O you tormentor of the enemies, if you are brave, (then) put up with one stroke of my mace."

Saying so, he heavily struck on his forehead with the mace. Being struck on the forehead with the mace, he vomitted blood, and was very angry, and struck on his head with the mace of the nature of death (i.e. the fatal mace). Suketu, knowing the ways of the world, also struck him on (his) shoulder. Thus the two, skilled in mace-fighting, being very much angry, fighting with maces, desiring to conquer each other, avoiding each other's strokes, were intent upon killing each other. In that war nobody would lose and nobody would win. The two very mighty and brave ones were wet with streams of blood on (i.e. flowing from) the head, the forehead, the shoulder, the chest, and all the limbs. Then Lakṣmīnidhi, getting angry, raised his mace speedily and he, the powerful one, went (forward) to strike the powerful younger brother of the king on his chest. Then the king's brother, seeing him coming, held his great mace, and went all of a sudden to kill him from (his) army to (Lakṣmīnidhi's) army. This one held (i.e. caught) in his hand the mace hurled by him; (and) the very powerful one struck him with the same mace. Then king Lakṣmīnidhi, seeing that he had taken (i.e. caught) his mace, desired to have hand-to-hand fight with the strongest one. Then the king's younger brother who was angry, who knew (i.e. proficient in) fighting of all kinds, and who was the best among the heroes, seized him with his arms. Then Lakṣmīnidhi struck on his chest with his fist. Then he too, raising his fist, struck him on his head. The two who were angry and were biting their bud-like lips, struck each other with terrible slaps with the hands resembling the thunderbolt. They indulged in boxing; they bit each other with their teeth; they seized each other's hair; they scratched each other with their nails.

63b-69. Thus the fight between the two was fierce and horripilating. Then the angry brother of the king seized the king's foot, swung him round and threw him on the ground. Lakṣmīnidhi seized the hand of the king's younger brother and swinging him round for a hundred times high up (in the air), overthrew him on the hip of the elephant. Then he fell on the ground; and then in a moment regaining consciousness, the brave one in the same way speedily whirled him in the sky (i.e. in the air). Then the two, who were fighting, again indulged in

boxing. The two, desiring to kill each other, clung to each other—one's foot on the other's foot, seizing the hand (of the enemy) with his own hand, chest with chest, and mouth with mouth. Both were very valourous, both swooned. Seeing that (men) in thousands were amazed and praised (them): "O king Lakṣmīnidhi is blessed; blessed is the mighty younger brother of the king!"

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

Killing of Citrāṅga

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Citrāṅga who was seated in his chariot and was at the neck of the Krauñca(-array), and was adorned with heroes, plunged into that army as a boar plunges into the ocean. Having stretched his very strong bow, resounding like thundering, he discharged sharp arrows burning crores of enemies. Great heroes with their entire bodies very much pierced with the arrows, lay (there) with the diadems and armours on their bodies and with their lips bitten.

4-8. When the battle proceeded like this, Puṣkala taking the bow that was variegated with gems and that very much tormented the enemies, went to fight. The forms of the two who had come together (to fight) looked very charming like the forms of Skanda and Tāraka in the Tāraka-battle in ancient times. That dexterous Puṣkala, quickly stretching his bow, quickly struck him with arrows having curved joints. Citrāṅga too, who was overpowered with anger, fixed sharp arrows on his bow and repeatedly discharged them in the front part of the battlefield. The taking (of the arrow from the quiver) was not noticed; the fixing (of the arrow on the bow) was not noticed; the discharge (of the arrow) was not noticed. Only the two (heroes) who had coiled (i.e. stretched) their bows were noticed.

9-13. Then that Puṣkala who was angry pierced the great, pre-eminent warrior on his chest with a hundred arrows.

Citrāṅga in a moment cut off all those arrows into (pieces of the size of) sesamum seeds; and with (his) arrows he struck Puṣkala on the limbs of his body. With his charming, deceptive missile Puṣkala whirled that divine chariot in the sky (i.e. air). It was indeed a wonder. That chariot, along with the horses, after having moved round in a circle (in the air) became steady; and with a great difficulty it remained on the battlefield. Seeing his valour, that intelligent Citrāṅga who was skilled in (the use of) all missiles, was angry, and said to Puṣkala:

Citrāṅga said:

14-19. You have done a good deed, appreciated by good warriors in the battle, viz. you whirled for a moment my chariot with the horses in the sky (i.e. air). (Now) see also my valour displayed by good warriors. You would be moving in the sky and (would be) honoured by gods.

He the best one among those familiar with the use (of weapons), and knowing (the use of) great missiles discharged with (i.e. from) his bow an extremely fierce missile. Being pierced in the battle with that arrow he alongwith his chariot, horses, flag and charioteer moved in the sky like a bird. (And) even before the best chariot quickly whirling in the sky (i.e. air) became steady, he discharged another arrow. The chariot, along with the charioteer, again whirled round (in the air). Seeing that act of his son, the king was amazed.

20-29. Puṣkala, the killer of the heroes on the side of the enemy, somehow became steady and struck his chariot, along with the charioteer and horses, with arrows. That hero, whose chariot was shattered, resorted to another chariot. That too was broken with his arrows by Puṣkala on the battlefield. When, after having got into another chariot he encountered him, he again shattered his chariot with sharp arrows. In this way that hero, Puṣkala, shining in the great battle, shattered ten chariots of the king's son. Then Citrāṅgaka, remaining in a variegated chariot, speedily came to fight with Puṣkala in the battle. In the battle he struck Puṣkala with five arrows. The son of Bharata (i.e. Puṣkala), being struck with those arrows, was extremely pained. He, being angry, raised his bow, and discharged ten

great, sharp arrows with their feathered ends beautified with gold, at his chest. Those extremely fierce arrows drank his blood. Having drunk it, they fell on the ground like one's ancestors who were false witnesses. Then the angry Citrāṅgaka took five arrows and discharged them at the forehead of the very vigourous son of Bharata. He (i.e. Puṣkala) being struck with those arrows, fixed an arrow on his excellent bow and took a vow to kill Citrāṅga:

30-38a. "O hero, listen to my pledge regarding killing you. Knowing it, you should attentively fight here. If, with this arrow, I do not deprive you of your life, then indeed it is my pledge that I would have (i.e. go to) that world which is reached by those people governed by Yama, who have polluted a chaste woman graceful with good conduct." Having heard these best words, the killer of great heroes laughed. The intelligent hero spoke auspicious words to Puṣkala: "Death always and everywhere is certain in the case of beings. Therefore, O you crest-jewel of heroes, I am not sorry about my death. O hero, that pledge which you, endowed with valour, have taken, is certainly true. That sin which a man who breaks (i.e. changes) the mind of him who desires to go on a pilgrimage, or which a man who knows (i.e. values) any other vow than the lofty vow of Ekādaśī has, gets, will accrue to me who would violate my vow (i.e. if I violate my vow)."

38b-39. Speaking these words only, he became silent, and took up his bow. Then he, having taken out from his quiver an excellent arrow, spoke distinct words leading to the enemy's murder.

Puṣkala said:

40-48. If I have served with a mind free from wickedness the pair of Rāma's feet, then my words would come true. If I have enjoyed my own wife, and do not know (i.e. have not seen) any other woman (even) in a dream, then my words will come true.

Saying so he fixed on his bow an arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world, and (capable of) cutting the heroes' head, and discharged it. The powerful son of the king,

seeing the arrow that was discharged, fixed on his bow a sharp arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world. That arrow cut off the arrow ready to kill him. There was a great wailing when that arrow was cut off. The hinder part of the arrow fell on the ground, and the forepart along with the blade cut off his neck in a moment like a lotus-stalk. Seeing him falling on the ground his soldiers wailed profusely and fled away. That excellent head along with the diadem and ear-rings fell on the ground and looked beautiful like the cresent moon (falling) from the sky. Seeing the hero fallen, Puṣkala, Bharata's son, plunged into the array, fully accompanied by all heroes.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

Subāhu's Defeat

Śeṣa said:

1-4. Then the king, having seen his pre-eminent son fallen dead (on the ground), was pained by the grief due to (the death of) his son, and wept very much. Being extremely afflicted, he struck on his head with his hands. Trembling very much, he shed tears from his lotus-like eyes. Taking the son who was fallen (dead), who was charming like the curved orb of the moon (i.e. like the crescent moon), who was wet with the blood (oozing) from the wounds caused by the arrows of Puṣkala, who looked charming by means of the ear-rings, whose pair of eye-brows was curved, who was the best, who had bitten his budlike lower lip, he kissed him with his lotus-like mouth and lamenting said these words:

5-7. "O (my) brave son, O hero, why do you not look at me, of an eager heart, with the pair of your clear eyes? Why are you without (i.e. not telling me) a story for my diversion? You indeed appear to have your mind plunging into the sea of anger. O son, tell me how (i.e. why) you are not laughing and not talking to me. (Why) are you not amusing me with your nectar (-like words) having a sweet taste, O son? O you very intelligent

one, take Śatrughna's horse adorned with a white chowrie and possessing beauty on account of a golden leaf; (but) give up your sleep.

8-12. This Puṣkala, spotless with his valour, the best due to his valour, the tormentor of his enemies, the killer of enemies' heroes, appears having a bow (in his hand) before you. Ward him off by good, sharp arrows discharged from your bow. O hero, how do you, being unconscious, lie in the battlefield? The elephants, the foot-soldiers, so also those seated in chariots, being afflicted through fear, will surrender themselves to you. Look at them, O very intelligent one. O son, how, without you, am I able to bear the sharp arrows of Śatrughna, discharged from his fierce bow on the battlefield? Henceforth who is capable of protecting me abandoned by you? If you will abandon your sleep, then I am capable of (having) victory."

13-19. The king, lamenting very much like this, afflicted due to the grief (of the death) of his son, very much and repeatedly beat his chest with his hand. Then (his two sons) Vicitra and Damana seated in their own chariots saluted the feet of their father, and spoke what was proper for the occasion: "O king, when we are alive, tell us what grief you have in your heart. The death longed for by the heroes in a battle, becomes great. Indeed this lordly Citrāṅga who, with his diadem, with his lips bitten with his teeth, looks splendid on the heroes' ground, is fortunate. Quickly tell what work, desired by you, we should do today. We two shall today destroy the entire helpless army of Śatrughna. Today only we shall cause to fall down from the chariot, Puṣkala, the killer of our brother in the battle, after having cut off his head adorned with a crown. Give up your grief. O you very highly intelligent one, how do you appear to be very much afflicted with grief?"

20-24. Having heard these words of his two brave and highly honoured sons, the great king gave up his grief and decided to fight. They too, who were furious in the battle, and who longed for an opponent, went into the enemy's army, full of unlimited warriors. The two heroes, resembling clouds in the rainy season fought in the battle—Damana with Riputāpa, and the other (i.e. Vicitra) with Nīlaratna. The powerful king, holding a bow and remaining in his chariot, covered with gold, beautified with

gems, rich in beauty on account of jewelled poles, and looking down upon great heroes skilled in archery, went to fight with Śatrughna surrounded by crores of heroes.

25-29. Seeing Subāhu, full of wrath, having come to fight with Śatrughna who had destroyed his son and had caused the killing of his entire army, Hanūmat having his nails as his weapon, making a loud sound, and moving by the side of Śatrughna ran to him. Subāhu, with his eyes full of anger, seeing that Hanūmat making a loud sound, coming to him, said laughing: "Where has Puṣkala gone after having killed my son in the battle? Today I shall quickly knock down his head with bright ear-rings. Where is Śatrughna, the protector of the horse? Where is Rāma? And where are the warriors? Let them see me who will snatch away their life in the battle to have come."

30-36. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, Hanūmat spoke to him: "Śatrughna, the destroyer of Lavaṇa (the son of Madhu), is the guardian of the army. How would he fight in the battle, O king, when his servant is in the fore. O best of men, having conquered me in the battle you will go to him." He speedily struck with ten arrows on the chest of the monkey who spoke like this, who was very strong and who remained like the best mountain. He took in the cavity of his hands the arrows that came to him and pounded them, the sharp ones tearing (i.e. capable of tearing) the enemy, (to pieces as small as) sesamum seeds. The very mighty one having pounded those arrows and roaring like the thunder of clouds and having surrounded his chariot with his tail, took it high up (in the air). Then that best king, while remaining in the sky (i.e. in the air), repeatedly cut off his (i.e. Hanūmat's) tail with arrows of sharp end. He (i.e. Hanūmat) struck on the end of his tail with arrows with curved joints, abandoned that divine chariot spotted with gold.

37-45. When he (i.e. Subāhu) was released by him, he, with his eyes full of wrath, struck with sharp arrows, that best monkey, Hanūmat. Hanūmat, the lord of monkeys, pierced with arrows and covered with blood everywhere (on all the parts of his body), entertained great wrath against the king. Having seized with his large teeth his chariot along with the horses, he speedily pounded it. That was indeed a wonder. Seeing his own chariot being broken, the mighty king quickly resorted to

another chariot and fought with the mighty (Hanūmat). The king, proficient in taking aim with an arrow and conversant with (the use of) great missiles, struck him on his tail, face, and chest and on arm and feet. Then the angry and best monkey (i.e. Hanūmat), jumped and struck with his foot on the chest of the king shining among good (i.e. brave) warriors. He, being struck with (Hanūmat's) foot fell unconscious on the ground; and vomitting blood from his mouth, he trembled with a flood of (i.e. heavy) breathing. Then Hanūmat who was very angry, speedily pounded the horses the heroes and (even) the elephants on the battlefield. Then his brother Suketu and king Lakṣmī-nidhi—both, quite ready, came near (each other) to fight.

46-50. Men, wounded with volleys of arrows showered by Puṣkala, fled and went (away) on seeing the king who was unconscious. The king's powerful son, Damana, seeing his army being defeated, stopped it as a dam stops the high-going sea. Then the king who being struck with the stroke of his foot by the best monkey in the battle was unconscious, saw a dream: in a pavilion on the bank of Sarayū in Ayodhyā Rāmacandra was surrounded by many pre-eminent brāhmaṇa sacrificing priests. There gods like Brahmā and others, crores of universes, with the palms of their hands joined, repeatedly praised him with eulogies.

51-54. Nārada and others with their hands glittering with lutes sang (the praise of) the dark Rāma, of beautiful eyes and holding a deer's horn. Celestial nymphs like Ghṛtācī and Menakā danced there. Vedas, being embodied, stood by Rāghava, full of all charm, and giver of whatever things (i.e. everything), and giver of pleasures to his devotees. Seeing this and other (things), he whose knowledge was destroyed by the curse of a brāhmaṇa, while getting up, regained consciousness, and said: "What have I seen?"

55-58a. Having got up, he, having a retinue of a crore of servants, and surrounded by a crore of chariots went on foot to the feet of Śatrughna. Having called Suketu, so also Vicitra and Damana who were ready to fight, he, who was familiar with law, warded them off. The great, righteous king, endowed with piety said to them: "O brother, O sons, listen to my words possessed of virtue. Now immediately stop fighting.

58b-67. Great unfairness has taken place, since you, O Damana, seized the excellent horse of Rāmacandra. This Rāma is the highest Brahman and is beyond effect and cause. He is the lord of the mobile and the immobile world. He has taken up a human form. I have now perceived this knowledge of Brahman. I, the innocent one, was formerly deprived of the wealth of my knowledge due to the curse of Asitāṅga. Formerly I had gone on a pilgrimage with a desire to know the true nature (of Brahman). There I saw many sages most familiar with religion. With a desire to know (Brahman) I went to see the sage Asitāṅga. Then the brāhmaṇa, showing favour to me said to me: "He, who is the lord of Ayodhyā, is known by the term Para Brahman (the highest Brahman). She who is his queen Jānakī, is said to be actually full of pure intelligence. The meditating sages, desiring to cross the boundless ocean of the worldly existence, difficult to be crossed, directly wait upon him by means of restraints etc. He whose banner is Garuḍa, removes great sins, merely when he is remembered. That wise (man) who waits upon him, will cross the mundane existence." Then I laughed at the brāhmaṇa (and said): "Who is he? Rāma is just a man. Who is that queen Jānakī who is full of joy and sorrow? How can a birthless one be born? What here is the act of a non-doer, which is beyond birth, death and old age? O sage, tell it to me."

68-75. The best sage, getting angry with me who spoke like this, cursed me: "O meanest among the mean, not knowing the (true) nature of him, you are replying (i.e. speaking) to me. Laughing, you are censuring Rāma, (by saying that) he is a human being. Therefore, you who do not know the truth, are (just) feeding your belly (i.e. you are selfish)." Then I clasped his feet. Then he, the ocean of pity, seeing my modesty, spoke to me with kindness: "O king, when you will create an obstacle in Rāma's sacrifice, then Hanūmat will forcibly strike you (with) his foot. Then you will realise the truth, not otherwise (simply) due to your desire." Formerly he told me like this. Now I have seen (i.e. realised) it. When the angry Hanūmat struck me on my chest, I saw Ramā's (i.e. Lakṣmī's) lord, of the nature of the perfect Brahman. Therefore, the very mighty one should bring the horse, rich in beauty, so also wealth and garments. I

shall give my kingdom (to Rāma). Seeing Rāma in the sacrifice giving great merit, I shall be blessed. Let them bring the horse. I like to hand him over (to Rāma)."

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

King Subāhu Surrenders to Śatrughna

Śeṣa said:

1. They, the strikers (of their enemies), (too) hearing the words of their father, said joyfully, "Let it be so", to the great king longing to see Rāma.

The sons said:

2-9. O king, we do not know anything except the lotuses of your feet. Let that which you have in your mind, take place quickly. Let this horse, adorned with a white chowrie, very much beautified with a jewelled necklace, and smeared with sandal (-paste) etc. be taken there. Your kingdom has the fruit of your orders (i e. your orders are obeyed), O lord. Your treasures are very rich. Your garments are very costly, fine and excellent. There is (plenty of) sandal; so also there is camphor. Your horses are very charming. The elephants are haughty due to rut. The chariots have golden poles. There are a hundred thousand female servants who are adorned with many ornaments of various colours. There are very agreeable servants. There are gems resembling the sun. There are various jewels. There are white pearls produced from the temples of elephants. There are a hundred thousand corals. O you very intelligent king, give all those things which are very splendid, to Rāmacandra. O king, offer us, your sons and your servants (to Rāmacandra). O king, how is it that you do not make your throne over to him?

Śeṣa said:

10. Hearing these words of his sons the king became glad;

and he said to the brave sons who were ready to do his words (i.e. to obey his orders):

The king said:

11. Let all (the heroes) having put on (their armours), having weapons in their hands, and surrounded by many chariots, bring the horse. Then I shall go to the king.

Śeṣa said:

12-18. Hearing these words of the king the diligent (men), brave in battle, viz. Vicitra, Damana, so also Suketu, went by his order. The heroes went to the city and took in front of the king the horse which was adorned with a golden plate etc., was richly decorated with a jewelled necklace, was decorated with a variegated note, was well adorned with a mass of pearls, and was held by the heroes possessing great weapons and missiles and having all (kinds of) charm from the front and the back by means of a rope. On the head of the horse, a white chowrie appeared aloft. In front of him a couple of good chowries shone again and again. (They) took the horse of the good (i.e. auspicious) horse-sacrifice, which had wind's speed and was made fragrant with Kṛṣṇāgaru sandal, in front of the king. The intelligent king seeing the horse decorated with a jewelled necklace, having the speed of mind and a beautiful form brought (before him) was pleased.

19-23. The very righteous king adorned with royal insignia and accompanied by his sons and grandsons went on foot to Śatrughna. Thinking that wealth is perishable and gives pain to them whose hearts are attached to it, he went to make a proper use of the unsteady wealth. Then he saw Śatrughna adorned with a white umbrella and being fanned by servants standing before him, asking Sumati (to narrate) Rāmacandra's story free from any tidings causing fear, well adorned by heroes, crowded with crores of heroes who desired to protect the horse, and surrounded on all sides by thousands of monkeys.

24-26. Seeing the feet of Śatrughna, he was delighted; and thinking 'I am lucky', and with a concentrated mind uttering

(the word) 'Rāma', he with his sons saluted the feet of Śatrughna. Seeing that pre-eminent and affectionate king, Śatrughna got up from his seat along with all his heroes and embraced him with his arms. The king, the killer of his enemies, having very much (i.e. devoutly) honoured Śatrughna, and being delighted, spoke with a faltering voice to Śatrughna.

Subāhu said:

27-31. Today I am blessed along with my sons, my family, my horses (and elephants) that I am seeing your feet praised by crores of kings. O you ocean of kindness, my ignorant son Damana had seized this best horse. (Please) forgive him this unfairness. He does not know (Rāma) the crest of the Raghus, the deity superior to all gods, the creator of the universe with ease, the destroyer and yet the protector also. (Take) this kingdom rich in all constituents and having mighty horses (and elephants). These treasures of me are full of wealth. These sons of me and I myself—all of us are Rāma's servants, obeying your commands. Take all (this) along with their effects. I have no superiority complex.

32-41. Where is that Hanūmat, the bee at Rāma's lotus-feet, due to whose favour I shall have the sight of the king of kings? What is not obtained on the earth in the company of the good? Seeing that great king (i.e. Rāma) having eyes like lotus-petals, I the ignorant one, have today overcome (the effect of) the brāhmaṇa's curse, and will obtain here the entire fruit of my existence, difficult to secure. Being very much separated from Rāma, I have passed a large (portion of my) life. Only a little (part of) it is left. How shall I see the best of the Raghus? Show me (that) Rāma who is proficient in the rite of sacrifice, and by the dust of whose feet (Ahalyā) the dear wife of sage (Gautama) who was turned into stone was purified. The crow—the bird—obtained the highest position due to his arrow's touch. Many in the battle went to (the best) position on seeing the lotus of his face. Those who respectfully take the name of this Raghunātha go to the highest place thought of by ascetics. Blessed are the people born in Ayodhyā, who having drunk with the cups of their own eyes the lotus of Rāma's face go to (i.e. obtain) happiness (and) great prosperity.

Having spoken like this to the king (i.e. Śatrughna) he offered the (sacrificial) horse, his kingdom and wealth (to Śatrughna) and said (to him): "O lord of the earth, I am (your) servant." Hearing these words of the king the eloquent Śatrughna who conquered the cities of his enemies and who was proficient in (using correct) words replied to the king:

Śatrughna said:

42-49. O king, how do you speak (like) this? You are old, (therefore) you are venerable to me. Let this Damana command your entire kingdom. It is the duty of kṣatriyas which enjoins a battle. By my order let all this kingdom and this wealth go back (to your son Damana). As Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) is always adorable to me by means of speech and mind, similarly, O lord of the earth, you will also be adorable (to me). Having armed yourself, having put on an armour, having taken a sword, and with your elephants and horses, you should today be ready to go after the horse.

The lord of the earth who was highly respected by Śatrughna, having heard these words of Śatrughna, consecrated his son on his throne, and the king, a great warrior and a knower of the truth, surrounded by great heroes, having performed purificatory rites according to the sacred commands over his son killed on the battlefield by Puṣkala, grieved for a while from the point of view of the world (i.e. as commonly people do). Recollecting Raghunātha he destroyed his grief with knowledge. Being ready and seated in a chariot, he, led by great warriors and surrounded by a great army, came to Śatrughna.

50-53. The king (i.e. Śatrughna), having seen him having come with his entire army, made up his mind to go to protect the horse. The horse marked by a note on his forehead and released by him, took a turn towards the left and wandered towards many eastern countries. At every place respectable and very brave kings saluted him. Nobody seized him. Some brought variegated garments, some brought wealth, (others brought) people, and some brought (i.e. handed over) their kingdom and saluted him.

CHAPTER THIRTY

Janaka Releases Sinners from Hell

Śeṣa said:

1-7. Then the horse, adorned with the note, reached Tejaḥpura (city) in which king Satyavān truthfully protected his subjects. Then Raghunātha's younger brother (Śatrughna) with a retinue of a crore going after the horse went in front of (the king) the conqueror of cities. Having seen the beautiful city, adorned with variegated ramparts, shining with golden pitchers all round, adorned at every place with thousands of temples of deities (Śatrughna said to Sumati). "In it monasteries of ascetics, full of ascetics, look beautiful. Here flows the great goddess (Gaṅgā), remaining on the head of him having three eyes (i.e. Śiva), and crowded with swans and ducks, and resorted to by hosts of sages. O Sir, in every house of brāhmaṇas smoke produced from the sacred fire purifies those whose minds were overflowing with sins." With his mind amazed due to the joy produced on seeing that city Śatrughna, the subduer of his enemies, said to Sumati.

Śatrughna said:

8. O minister, tell (me), whose city this is, which being seen by me, gives joy to my mind as it is righteously protected.

Śeṣa said:

9. Hearing these words of king Śatrughna, Sumati told him everything properly and without exaggeration.

Sumati said:

10-13. O lord, being attentive, listen to the auspicious tales of Viṣṇu's devotees, hearing which one is freed from sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Satyavān is a king who is liberated while living, is a bee resorting to the lotuses in the form of Rāma's excellent feet, knows sacrifices and their constituents, is a performer of sacrifices and a great protector, whom his father known as Ṛtambhara-famous in the world and very religious, obtained after having propitiated the cow

by means of many vows. The cow, pleased (with him) gave him a son, adorned with many virtues and having a great charm, (called) Satyavān. Know that best king.

Śatrughna said:

14-15. Who is king Ṛtambhara? Why did he worship the cow? How did he have a son—a devotee and worshipper of Viṣṇu? Tell me all this account of the devotee of Viṣṇu. When heard, it removes the mountain of the great sins of beings.

Śeṣa said:

16-18. Hearing these very meaningful words of Śatrughna, he clearly told him the story about his origin. Formerly there was king Ṛtambhara who was childless. He had many wives, but did not have a child on (i.e. from any one of) them. Then he, intent on his well-being, asked the sage named Jābāli who had luckily come there, the cause of (i.e. leading to) the birth of a son.

Ṛtambhara said:

19-21. O lord, tell me, the childless one, the words leading to the birth of a son. Knowing from you that by doing which an excellent child (i.e. a son) holding (i.e. continuing) my family will be born to me, I shall certainly carry out these excellent words (of you). (I shall give) a gift, (I shall observe) a vow, (visit) a sacred place or (perform) a sacrifice, O best sage.

Hearing these words of the king longing for a son and bowing to him, the best sage told him words leading to the birth of a son.

He said:

22-30. O lord, there are three means for him who longs for a child: Viṣṇu's grace, grace of a cow or of Śiva. Therefore, O king, you offer worship to a cow having a divine body, in whose tail, mouth, horn and back gods live. When she is pleased, she will give what is longed for (and) is accompanied

by righteousness. Knowing thus, O Ṛtambhara, offer worship to a cow. The ancestors of him and the deities also are always pleased with him who everyday worships a cow with grass etc. All the desires of him, of a pious vow, who gives a cow her daily measure of food, are really fulfilled. A thirsty cow tied at home, an unmarried daughter in menses (i.e. who has attained puberty) and a deity with faded flowers destroy the religious merit obtained before. The ancestors of him who forbids a cow that is eating her grass (i.e. grass meant for her), are on the point of falling (into hell). That foolish man who beats a cow with a stick, goes, bereft of his hands, to the city of Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). The ancestors who have gone down (to hell), of him who wards off the gadflies, dance (saying): "This fortunate son (i.e. descendant) of me (of us) will emancipate us."

31-37. In this case they narrate this ancient account: the wonderful event of Janaka that formerly took place in the city of Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). Once king Janaka gave up his life by means of abstract meditation. Then an aeroplane decorated with a mass of small bells came (there). Then the king, with his body being carried by servants, got into it, and went (to heaven). On his way he went near the city of Yama. Then sinners were being oppressed in crores of hells. Having received the wind (i.e. breezes blowing) from the body of Janaka they became happy. The affliction due to the tormentation in hell became joyful (i.e. bearable) for them. Due to the wind (i.e. breezes blowing) from Janaka's body, their great misery perished (i.e. disappeared) at that time. Then the beings oppressed due to sins, not desiring separation from him, lamented very much. They uttered piteous words to him: "O blessed one, do not go from here. We who are tormented, are happy due to the wind (i.e. breezes blowing) from your body."

38-39. Hearing these words, the very righteous king, filled with a flood of pity, thought in his mind: 'If the beings are happy here due to the touch of the wind (i.e. breezes blowing) from my body, I shall stay in this city only. This is charming heaven (for me).'

40-43a. Thinking like this, the king, with his mind being sympathetic, and causing happiness to beings, stayed there only

in front of the hell. Dharma (i.e. Yama), causing severe torment to the sinners, came there at the door of hell. Then he saw king Janaka, doer of great meritorious deeds, full of pity, who had stood at the door (having come) in an aeroplane. The lord of the dead bodies (i.e. Yama), smiling, said these words to Janaka:

43b-53. "O king, why have you, the crest-jewel of piety, come here? This is a place for the wicked sinners who cause harm to the life (of others). O king, men like you, who do meritorious acts, do not come (to this place). Those men who are intent upon deceiving others, who are engaged in censuring others, and are intent on (grabbing) other's wealth, alone come here. That man who would abandon his wife who is religious and absorbed in serving him without her fault, would come here. He who, greedy through attachment for wealth, deceives his friend, comes here, and receives intense torment from me. Having bound the man who, a foolish one, does not remember Rāma mentally, with words or acts, through hypocrisy, hatred, or ridicule, I throw him among these and cause him to be boiled. Those who have remembered the lord of Ramā, leave my place and quickly go to Vaikuṇṭha. O very intelligent king, my servants, unable to look at (people) like you, bring those who are great sinners. Therefore, O great king, go, enjoy many pleasures. Having got into an excellent aeroplane, enjoy the (fruit of the) religious merit earned by you." Having heard these words of Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama), the lord of that (city), he, full of the flood of compassion, said to him:

Janaka said:

54-55. O lord, due to pity for (these) beings I (shall) not go (to Vaikuṇṭha). Comforted by the wind (i.e. breezes blowing) from my body, they are staying here. O king, if you release all these living in hell, then, being happy, I shall go to heaven resorted to by meritorious persons.

Jābāli said:

56. Hearing these words, he, pointing out to him each one of the many dwelling in hell, said to Janaka:

Dharma said:

57-65. This one cohabited with his friend's wife that confided in him. Therefore, I have roasted him on an iron-pale for a myriad of years. Then having thrown him—the defaulter—into the species of pigs, he, marked with the marks of a eunuch, would be cast down into the species of human beings. This one repeatedly and forcibly embraced the wife of another (man). Therefore he, is roasted in Raurava (hell) for a hundred years. This wicked one stole the wealth of others and enjoyed it. Therefore, having cut off his hands, I shall cook him in puss and blood. This one did not honour and welcome a guest oppressed with hunger that had come to him even by words. Therefore, he should be dropped into the Tāmisra (hell) full of fuel. Let him, troubled by bees, meet with torment for a hundred years. This one, being shameless, loudly reviled another person. This one too sending forth his ears (i.e. with great interest) listened that reviling many times. Therefore, these two have fallen into a dark well. This one who had deceived his friend being dejected, is very much roasted in Raurava hell. Therefore, making them eat the fruit of their sins, I shall release them. O best among men, you, accumulating a heap of religious merit (would please) go (to heaven).

Jābāli said:

66. Thus he pointing out the sinful beings became quiet. The devotee of Rāma with his eyes full of pity said:

Janaka said:

67. Tell me quickly how the miserable beings can be free from hell and doing what would they obtain happiness.

Dharma (*i.e. Yama*) *said*:

68-71. These have never propitiated Viṣṇu. They have never listened to his stories. How can (these) sinners (then) be free from hell? If, O great king, you (desire to) release them, even though they are great sinners, then give them that religious merit (of you about) which I shall tell (you now). Once, having got up in the morning, you meditated with pure heart upon

this Śrī Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma) who is called the remover of great sins. Give them that religious merit which you collected when you uttered with pure heart the name Rāma, Rāma; by that their freedom from hell would take place.

Jābāli said:

72-77. Hearing these words of the intelligent Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama), the great king gave (them) the religious merit obtained by him from his birth. (He said:) "Let there be pleasing release of these from hell due to the religious merit earned (by me) from birth by the worship of Raghunātha." When he was speaking like this, the beings dwelling in hell that moment only became free from hell and became divine-bodied. They said to king Janaka: "O king, by your favour we have been in a moment freed from miserable hell, and will (now) go to the highest position." He intent on showing kindness to all beings, seeing those men resembling the sun freed from hell, was very much pleased in mind. All those, praising Janaka, the great king, the treasure of pity, went to heaven adorned by gods.

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

King Ṛtambhara is Blessed with a Son

Jābāli said:

1. When those men living in hell went (to heaven), king (Janaka) asked Yama, the best among those who know dharma.

The king said :

2-4. O Dharmarāja, you have said that men who commit sins and are not interested in religious discourses, come to your place. O you righteous one, tell me for what sin I have come here, and the cause of my sin, from the beginning.

Hearing these words of him, O you tormentor of the enemies,

Dharmarāja then told him (the cause of) his arrival to Yama's city.

Dharmarāja said :

5-12. O king, you have great religious merit. None else has like it on the surface of the earth. O you who have been observing the vow of (drinking) the honey from the two (lotus-)feet of Raghunātha, the celestial river in the form of your fame which gives great joy and emancipates the wicked, purifies all the sinners full of the dirt (of sin). Still, O you best king, there is a small bit of sin (in you), due to which you, full of merit, have come to my residence (Saṁyaminī). Once you prevented a cow that was grazing (from doing so). Due to the effect of that sin, you have seen the gates of hell. Now, freed from (that) sin and endowed with great religious merit, enjoy many many pleasures obtained through your religious merit. Raghunātha, the ocean of pity, taking away (i.e. desiring to remove) the misery of these, has sent (you) the devotee of Viṣṇu on this great route. O you of a good vow, how would they have been free from sin, if you had not come along this way? O very intelligent one, people like you who are afflicted by others' misery and who are the abode of kindness, thus remove the misery of beings.

Jābāli said :

13-15. Having saluted Yama, who was speaking like this, he went to heaven in a divine aeroplane adorned with the host of celestial nymphs. Therefore, cows are to be honoured; one should not even mentally censure them. One who censures them, remains in hell as long as the fourteen Indras rule. Therefore, O best among kings, worship a cow. Being pleased, she will quickly give you a son who is devoted to piety.

Sumati said :

16-20. Having heard it, he asked about the worship of a cow: How is she to be respectfully and carefully worshipped? What kind of man does she make him? Jābāli duly told him the worship of a cow. He who has undertaken the vow of (worshipping) a cow, should everyday go to the forest to graze her. He

should make the cow eat barley-grains and should collect them from her dung. O king, one longing for a son should eat those barley-grains. He should drink pure water (only) when she drinks water. He should be seated (only) when she would sit on a high seat. Everyday he should ward off the gnats and should himself collect grass or fodder (for her). She gives a son devoted to piety to him who does like this.

Sumati said :

21-27. Hearing these words that pious Ṛtambhara, longing for a son, practised the vow. Worshipping the cow everyday, he pleased her with grass etc. The intelligent one, showing great care for her food (like) barley, warded off the gnats. Of him who was worshipping the cow grazing grass etc. in the forest and having fear from nowhere, auspicious days passed. Once that king, curious to observe the beauty of the forest, had cast his eyes on it, and was roaming all around. At that time a lion having come from the interior of the forest struck the cow that was yelling in many ways, that was helpless and that was afflicted due to the burden of the lion (on her body). Then the king, having come there and having seen his mother (i.e. the cow) struck by the lion, was very much distressed and cried. Being afflicted he came to Jābāli, the best sage, and asked him about the atonement for the sin of killing a cow.

Ṛtambhara said :

28-29. O lord, I had resorted, by your order, to the forest and looked after the cow. A lion not falling within the range of (my) sight (i.e. not noticed by me) came from somewhere and attacked the cow. What do (i.e. should) I do for the atonement of that sin, by your order? How can I fulfil the vow granting a son to me?

30-40. The best sage said to the king speaking like this: "O king, there are means for the atonement of a sin. There are expiations, O you very intelligent one, for all sins of one who has killed a brāhmaṇa, who is ungrateful and who drinks liquor. All the sins of him who observes the (vows) duly go away by means of vows like Kṛcchra, Cāndrāyaṇa (observed) along with

restraints and controls. For two sinners who have committed heaps of sins, there is no expiation: for him who deliberately kills a cow and one who censures Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). The meanest one who mentally desires (giving) pain to cows, resides in a place in hell as long as fourteen Indras (rule). Even that unfortunate man who just once censures Hari, would, surrounded by his sons and grandsons, see hell. Therefore, O lord of men, you should realise that he who censures Viṣṇu or causes pain to cows never gets release. There is an expiation if a cow is killed through ignorance. You (now) go to Ṛtuparṇaka, the intelligent devotee of Rāma. He looks equally upon all his foes and friends. He will quickly tell you the expiation for this killing of the cow. Formerly you had attached his countries, so he had abandoned them. Giving up enmity, go to Ṛtuparṇaka. Being composed, do quickly what he will tell you (to do), so that there will be the expiation of the sin committed by you."

41-48. Hearing these words of (i.e. spoken by) him, he went to Ṛtuparṇaka who was an excellent devotee of Rāma and who looked equally upon his foe and friend. He told him whatever, the killing of the cow etc., took place. He too thought of a means for the expiation of that sin. Having reflected for a moment, king Ṛtuparṇa who was intelligent and who knew dharma laughed and said to Ṛtambhara: "O king, who am I before (i.e. as compared with) the sages knowing the scriptures? Why have you, abandoning them, come to me, fancying myself to be learned? If you have faith in me, then I shall say something. O best of men, carefully listen to my words. By means of act, thought and words have recourse to Raghunātha. O you highly intelligent one, please the lord of the worlds without deceit. When pleased, he will grant (i.e. satisfy) all desires of your mind. He will destroy the sin of having ignorantly killed a cow. O you religious-minded one, O you best one, remembering Rāma, look after the cow. By giving gold to a brāhmaṇa, you will atone for the sin."

Sumati said :

49-57. Hearing those words king Ṛtambhara, with his mind purified, took to remembering Rāma, and observed the vow. Engaged in the well-being of all beings, and always remembering Rāma, he, looking after the cow, went to the forest as before.

Surabhi was pleased with him. When gratified, she said: "O king, choose a boon from me according to the desire of your mind?" Then the king said (to her): "Give me a son who is a devotee of Rāma, who is fond of his father, and who will follow his own duty." The merciful, desire-yielding, divine cow, being pleased, gave the boon to the king longing for a son, and disappeared. Then at the (proper) time he obtained a son—Viṣṇu's devotee and serving Rāma. His father (i.e. king Ṛtambhara) named him Satyavān. Having obtained the son (named) Satyavān who was greatly devoted to his father and comparable to Indra (only) in valour, the great king obtained great joy. The king, having obtained a righteous son, was full of joy and having deposited (i.e. entrusted) the kingdom with him, went to a forest for practising penance. There, with his mind full of devotion he propitiated Viṣṇu, and with his sins fully washed, he physically went to the place of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

Satyavān Meets Śatrughna

Sumati said:

1-9. O dear one, this king too who was well known by the name Satyavān pleased by means of his duty Raghunātha, the lord of the worlds. Being pleased (with him) the lord of Ramā (i.e. Viṣṇu) gave him unswerving devotion to his feet, difficult to obtain through crores of religious deeds by his worshippers. He, full of pity and not being fatigued, everyday told the purifying tale of Śrī Raghunātha to people. He beat with sticks, causing fear even to Yama, the man who did not worship Ragunātha (i.e. Rāma), the lord of Ramā (i.e. Viṣṇu). He made every man who would be above the age of eight till he would be eighty years old, observe the fast of Ekādaśī. To him Tulasī was dear; his neck never abandoned the excellent garland from the lotus-like feet of Raghunātha. He was venerable even to the sages.

How then was he not (so) to others? He loved remembering Raghunātha. His sins were washed. His misfortune was destroyed. He, knowing that the very wonderful horse of Rāmacandra has come, will come and give you the kingdom free from troublesome fellows. O king, I have told you the best (thing) that you have asked for. O lord, what more do you ask? Order it (and) I (shall) do it.

Śeṣa said:

10. The horse, possessing many wonders, went into the city. Seeing him, all the people went to the king, and reported to him.

The people said :

11-12. A certain horse, shining with a note on his forehead white like the water of Gaṅgā, has come.

Hearing those charming and pleasing words uttered by the people, the king laughed and said (to them): "Ascertain whose horse that is."

13-20a. They told him: "A horse, looked after by Śatrughna, has come from the city of king Rāma." He, having heard the very pleasing, two-lettered name of Rāma, marked with a faltering sound, was very much delighted in mind: "The horse of that Rāma, the lord of Ayodhyā, who is constantly thought by me has come with Śatrughna to my city. Hanūmān who serves the feet of Rāma and who never forgets Rāma in his mind, will also be there. I (shall) go there where there are Śatrughna, (Hanūmat) the son of Maruta (i.e. the Wind) and other men who serve the lotus-like feet of Rāma". He ordered his minister: "Quickly come, taking all the royal wealth with me. I shall go to look after the excellent horse of Raghunātha, and to do (i.e. to offer) service to Rāma's lotus-like feet, which is difficult to be had." Saying so he with his soldiers went out to Śatrughna.

20b-26. Just then Rāma's brother (Śatrughna) along with his soldiers reached the city. Mighty heroes roared; chariots produced big sounds; there were the sounds of the triumphant conches; everywhere there were the flute-sounds. King Satyavān, having come along with his ministers, saluted (Śatrughna's) feet

and presented to him his very wealthy kingdom. Śatrughna, having recognised the king, observing Rāma's vow, gave his great kingdom to his son named Rukma. He, endowed with truth, and of great glory, having embraced the very glorious Hanūmat of mighty arms and also other devotees of Rāma, regarded himself blessed; and with Śatrughna, he was delighted in mind. Just then the horse well-protected by heroes went a long way off. Śatrughna along with that king and heroes went (after the horse).

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

Śatrughna's Army Gets Ready to Fight Vidyunmālin

Śeṣa said :

1-7a. When many excellent warriors like Śatrughna and all great kings having crores of chariots were going, there was all of a sudden, on the way, very fearful darkness in which kinsmen could not recognise their own man or a stranger. The sky was covered with dust and was full of lightning and thunder. In such a very fearful confusion clouds showered profuse blood with puss and (other) foul things. The heroes who were great enemies, became very much confounded. When the people were perplexed, the condition was: 'What is this? What is this?' The eyes of people of renowned vigour were pervaded with darkness. (A demon) who was well known as Vidyunmālin who was Rāvaṇa's friend, lived in the nether world and was surrounded by a line of demons took away the horse. He was seated in an aeroplane made of iron and going according to (occupants') desire.

7b-10a. He causing fear to all heroes took away the horse. In a short while the darkness disappeared and the sky became pure. Those heroes led by Śatrughna said: "Where is the horse?" Looking for the best horse, they saw one another; (but) when they did not see the horse, there was loud wailing. "Where is the horse of (i.e. intended for) the horse-sacrifice? Who, the wicked one, has taken it (away)?"

10b-12. They spoke such words. Just then that lord of demons who was surrounded by the best demons, seated in an excellent aeroplane, was seen by all the best warriors, seated in chariots and adorned with valour. There fearful demons, having bad faces, terrible mouths, long fangs, were seen ready to seize the army (of Śatrughna).

13-14. Then they informed Śatrughna, the best among kings: "We do not know (how) one, shining in an aeroplane, took away the horse into the sky. Having confounded us—the heroes, with darkness, he came, and seized the horse. O best king, do what is proper."

15-18. Hearing those words, Śatrughna was full of great anger. (He said:) "Who is this powerful demon that has seized my horse? Today let the aeroplane, struck by the volley of my arrows, fall down. Today let the head of my enemy fall down, (after being struck) by my arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads. Make ready all chariots filled with great weapons and missiles. Let (our) warriors go to strike back the horse-snatcher." Speaking thus, he, with his eyes red due to anger, said to his minister who knew justice and injustice and who was proficient in the affairs of a war.

Śatrughna said :

19-21. O minister, tell me who, that are diligent in killing the demon, are very brave, are having great weapons, are best among those who know (the use of) excellent missiles, should be appointed (to kill the demon). Think and quickly tell me. I shall do your words (i.e. I shall do as you tell me). Tell me about the heroes knowing (the use of) all missiles and capable of (fighting with) him.

Having heard this the minister spoke befitting words showing the heroes, bent quickly (before Śatrughna), capable of (fighting in) that excellent battle.

Sumati said :

22-31. Let Puṣkala, the tormentor of the enemies, and having great weapons and missiles and ready to get victory in the

battle, go to conquer the demon. In the same way let Lakṣmīnidhi possessing a mass of missiles, go. Let him break his vehicle with his sharp arrows. Hanūmat of bold deeds is capable of fighting with the demons. O lord, let him strike the demon with his face and tail. So also let all the brave monkeys who are skilled in fighting and are prompted by your words, go to fight. Let the best ones (like) Sumada, Subāhu, Pratāpāgrya, go to fight with the mean demons with their sharp arrows. May you too, seated in a chariot endowed with great weapons and ready to kill the demon, obtain victory in the battle. O king, this is my view. Let those warriors who are brave and capable of destroying him, go (to fight with him). What is the use of (sending) many other warriors?

When the minister, named Sumati, and best among the heroes, spoke like this, Śatrughna told the heroes skilled in fighting (as follows): "O heroes, let Puṣkala and others, who are skilled in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, state in my presence their pledge to destroy the demon. Let you, making a great solemn declaration befitting your valour and accompanied by the army, go into the battlefield."

32-33. Hearing these words, the mighty (heroes) of Śatrughna, who were endowed with lustre, made their own great solemn declarations. Then, first, the hero Puṣkala, endowed with great energy, having heard the words of the lord of the earth, made this (i.e. the following) solemn declaration:

Puṣkala said:

34-40. O best king, listen to my very wonderful solemn declaration made due to my valour in the presence of all people that are listening to it. If I do not make the demon overcome with a swoon and his face full of scattered hair, let me have the sin which he who enjoys his own daughter, gets, or which one gets by censuring deities. Let me have that sin if I falsify your words. O great king, listen to my pledge in case the very powerful soldiers (of the demon) do not fall on being pierced with my arrows. If I do not make my words true, let me have the sin of him who distinguishes between Viṣṇu and Śiva or Śiva and Śakti. These are all the words uttered by me (i.e. I had to say). That

firm devotion which I have towards the lotus-like feet of Raghunātha, will itself make (my words) true.

Hearing that pledge of Puṣkala, king Lakṣmīnidhi, made a truthful solemn declaration, adorned with his valour.

Lakṣmīnidhi said :

41-43. If I turn back (from the battlefield), I would have that sin which a man gets if he keeps mum on hearing the censure of the Vedas, or being outcast from all religions, he mentally likes (the censure of Vedas); (I shall have the sin of) the brāhmaṇa who is wicked and sells liquor and lac etc., or who, the fool, being tempted by greed sells a cow; (or of him) who having drunk the water from the money of a mleccha, does not observe an expiation.

44-54. Having heard the pledge, Hanūmat, skilled in battle, said, after having remembered Rāma's feet, (the following) auspicious words: "My lord (Rāma) whom all gods along with demons salute by (bowing) their heads (adorned) with gems, should always be reflected on by meditating saints in their hearts. The glorious Rāma is the lord of Ayodhyā and is worshipped by the lord of the world. Those words which one would utter by remembering him will come true. O king, who (i.e. how insignificant) is this mean, weak demon, seated in (the aeroplane) moving according to (occupants') desire? Tell me quickly what should be done by me. Who would (i.e. is able to) knock me down? With my tail I (shall) lift up the Meru (mountain) along with the lord of gods. I (shall) dry up the entire ocean. I shall even drink up the Saṁvarta (cloud abounding in water). I have the favour of king Śrī Raghunātha and Jānakī. O king, there is nothing on the surface of the earth which would ever be unattainable for me. If, O king, these words uttered by me would be untrue, then at that time only I would be away from devotion to Raghunātha. If I falsify my words, then let me have the sin which a śūdra who would keep a tawny cow with the desire (to obtain) milk (from her), would have. If I speak false words, let me have the sin of that śūdra who infatuated by love has sexual intercourse with a brāhmaṇa woman. Certainly let me have that sin which a

man greedy through the taste of the tongue would drink liquor by the smell of which a man would go to hell and by its touch would even go to Raurava (hell), if, due to Rāma's grace I shall not make my pledge true."

55-59. When this was spoken by the great heroes, the warriors quickly made a solemn declaration shining with their valour. Śatrughna also praising those heroes skilled in battle (with the words) 'Well (said), well (said)', made a solemn declaration when people were observing (i.e. in the presence of people): "In front of you, I shall declare my vow adorned with my energy. Let the magnanimous ones endowed with exertion for fight, listen. If I do not strike with my arrows and knock down on the ground from the aeroplane his head cut off and broken from his trunk, let me certainly have that sin which one would get by giving false testimony or by stealing gold or due to censuring the Vedas."

60-63. Hearing the good words of Śatrughna, those (warriors) honoured by heroes (said:) "O Rāma's brother, you are blessed. Who else but you would be (so) great? O lord of the world, you alone killed the very mighty Lavaṇa, Madhu's son, who caused misery to gods and demons. Who (i.e. how insignificant) is the demon? Where (i.e. of what importance) is his small army? O you very intelligent one, you will (just) in a moment destroy him." Saying so, the heroes became ready on the battlefield. Gladly they went to (attack) the demon to make their pledge true.

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

Vidyunmālin Killed in Battle

Śeṣa said :

1-7. With chariots having good horses (yoked to them), rich in charm and full of all weapons and missiles and endowed with various jewels, they went to (i.e. marched against) the mean demons. Seeing them the demon seated in a vehicle going according

to (occupants') desire, as it were, repeatedly threatening them, said with a deep-sounding voice: "Let the brave warriors not go to fight. Let them go home. Let them not cast their life. I shall not release the excellent horse. I am well-known as Vidyunmālin, and am the friend of Rāvaṇa. I have come to atone for my friend who is dead. Where has that Rāma who has killed (my) friend Rāvaṇa, gone? Where also is his brother (Śatrughna) who is the crest-jewel of all the brave men? Having killed him—the younger brother of Rāma, and drinking his blood along with bubbles coming up from his neck, I shall atone for (the death of) him (i.e. Rāvaṇa)." Hearing these words Puṣkala, the best among the excellent warriors, said to him endowed with valour and bravery:

Puṣkala said :

8-11. Excellent warriors do not brag in the battle. By means of showering their weapons and missiles they show (their) valour. O you maddened one, he who killed Rāvaṇa is surrounded by his kinsmen. Where will you go by snatching his horse? You will fall (when struck) with Śatrughna's arrows discharged from his bow. Jackals will eat you fallen dead on the ground. O wicked one, do not roar when I, Rāma's servant, am (here). In a battle excellent warriors roar in the battle due to great accomplishment after conquering their enemy.

Śeṣa said :

12-21. The best demon hit strongly with a (missile called) Śakti, Puṣkala—the hero—who was speaking thus, and who was ferocious in battle, on his chest. That Puṣkala, seeing that great iron missile, attached (i.e. decked) with gold, cut it off with three very fierce and sharp arrows. Made lustreless by the arrows, it fell on the ground in three parts. While falling it shone like Viṣṇu's three missiles. Seeing the missile cut off the demon, the tormentor of his enemy, quickly took up a lance having three points and made of iron. The best demon discharged it having sharp points and resembling fire. He, called Puṣkala, made it into (pieces like) sesamum seeds with his arrows. Puṣkala, Rāma's servant, having quickly cut off the trident, fixed on his bow sharp arrows having the speed of mind. The arrows quickly sticking (i.e. striking) his chest produced anger, as the charming qualities

of Viṣṇu produce love in the heart of a devotee of Viṣṇu. The very ferocious Vidyunmālin afflicted with pain due to being pierced by his arrow and ready to strike took up a fierce mallet. He whose name was Vidyunmālin, sent (i.e. discharged) that mallet. It struck the chest (of Puṣkala). It produced (blood) and made him foul. Puṣkala, the tormentor of his enemies and the hero struck by the mallet, shaking with tremour, fell in the middle part of the chariot.

22-28. In the same way his brother Ugradaṁṣṭra fought with Lakṣmīnidhi, with fatal weapons and missiles discharged in various ways. Ragaining consciousness just at that moment, he said to the demon: "O greatest among the demons, you are fortunate. Great is your valour. Now listen also to my great vow honoured by the brave. Today with sharp arrows I shall knock you down from the aeroplane." Speaking thus, he took up an arrow, which was sharp, difficult to be overtaken, burning, having the lustre of fire, and having great excellence. Just when he exerted to retaliate, a very fierce and sharp arrow got into his chest. Confused by the arrow and with his heart perplexed, the demon, losing his consciousness, fell on the ground from the middle part of the vehicle going according to the occupants' desire. Ugradaṁṣṭra saw his elder brother falling. Being afraid of the enemy, he took him into the interior of the vehicle.

29-37. With great anger he said to his enemy Puṣkala, the best among the mighty: "O wicked one, having overthrown my brother, where will you go? Having vanquished me in the battle (i.e. if you vanquish me in the battle then only), you will get excellent victory. When I am (alive), put an end to the hope of victory in your heart." He (i.e. Puṣkala), with his eyes full of anger, quickly struck with ten arrows on (i.e. discharged ten arrows into) the chest of the wicked one who was speaking like this. The wicked one, struck with ten arrows by the magnanimous Puṣkala, got angry in his mind, and started to strike him. Grinding his teeth in anger, he raised his fist and struck (Puṣkala). Causing in (others') hearts fear (like) the noise of the whirlwind (caused) by the fall of the thunderbolt, he roared. The hero Puṣkala, knowing (how to wield) great missiles, struck with a fist, desiring the destruction of the wicked-minded one, did not tremble. He discharged into his chest arrows very sharp like the

teeth of a calf. The demon, pained (due to being struck) with those arrows, took up a trident which had three points, which was burning and which was extremely fierce due to lines of flames. The fierce one struck (i.e. hit) the chest of Puṣkala, the great hero. The best archer, struck by the trident, fainted. He suffered from a great mental depression and fell on the chariot.

38-51. Knowing him to have fainted, Hanūmat, the son of Wind, with his heart overcome with anger, spoke to the demon: "O you wicked-minded one, where are you going? With kicks I shall kill you who have come here to snatch away the horse." Saying so, and remaining in the air, he tore with the tips of his nails the great demons, the soldiers of the enemy seated in the vehicle. The son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat) struck some with his tail, some with the soles of his feet, some with his fore-arms. Some, when struck, perished; some, being struck, fainted. Then (they) afflicted and frightened due to strokes with the feet, fled. The Wind's son (i.e. Hanūmat) killed there many very fierce demons; they were cut off, broken and divided into two pieces. The vehicle, going according to the will (of the occupants) and with its defences and gateways broken, was surrounded on all sides by the wailing demons. When the very brave Hanūmat was in the sky in a moment, on the earth the (next) moment, the unassailable vehicle moving according to the (occupants') will, would be seen here and there. The monkey, Wind's son, taking any form at will, would be seen striking (the enemies), wherever that vehicle (moved). When the great men (i.e. the demons) remaining in the vehicle, were thus distressed at that time, Ugradaṁṣṭra, the lord of demons, approached Hanūmat. (He said): "O monkey, you have done a great deed, viz. knocking down the warriors. If you stay for a moment, I shall deprive you of your life." Speaking thus, that wicked-minded one struck Hanūmat with a very sharp trident having the lustre of a blazing fire. The mighty one (i.e. Hanūmat) seized the trident coming to him in his mouth and reduced the entire one made of gold to powder. Having powdered that iron trident discharged by the demon, the powerful Hanūmat struck him with many blows of his open hands.

52-57. He (i.e. Ugradaṁṣṭra) struck here and there by the lord of the monkeys with the blows of his open hands, was afflicted and created an illusion, causing fear to the entire world. Then there was

darkness in which none was noticed, in which (a soldier) belonging to one's own side or of the enemy did not recognise many men. Rocks resembling mountain-peaks fell upon the (bodies of) excellent warriors. Being struck by them all of them were perplexed. (Streaks of) lightning flashed; clouds thundered violently, showered puss and blood, discharged dirty water. Many trunks with the heads having ear-rings cut off, were seen falling from the sky. Everywhere naked, ugly, fierce, terrible, very hideous demons, with their hair very much scattered, were seen.

58-63. Then the people, distressed and full of fear of one another, took to their heels; a great portent was thought (to appear). Then the very glorious Śatrughna came (there) in his chariot, and having remembered Śrī Rāma, he fixed arrows on his bow. Having shaken off the illusion with the bewitching missile the powerful one, scattering streams of arrows in the sky, showered the demon (with them) in the battle. Then the quarters brightened up; the sun had its halo (of lustre), clouds went (away) as they had come; lightning subsided. Then the great vehicle, occupied by the demons, and full of words like 'Cut off, break' was seen in front; and thousands of arrows with their feathered ends adorned with gold, repeatedly fell on the vehicle remaining in the sky and going according to (occupants') desire.

64-68. Then the aeroplane, a portion of which was broken, did not appear (moving) high, (but) appeared like a portion of the city that is broken, on the earth. Then the demon, being very angry, fixed arrows on the bow, and roaring, he scattered (i.e. discharged) them on (Śatrughna) Rāma's brother. Those arrows in hundreds stuck to his body in many ways. They, the sharp and bent ones, causing streams of blood to flow, gave him great charm. Śatrughna, endowed with a great power, fixed on his bow a missile presided over by the Wind-deity and causing the demons to tremble. The demons, with their hair loose, and falling from the vehicle and the sky, appeared like groups of ghosts and vampires moving in the sky.

69-76. The demon's son, seeing the missile discharged by Raghunātha's brother, fixed on his bow a missile presided over by Śiva. From it proceeded vampires, ghosts, evil spirits and fiends, having skulls and swords and drinking profuse blood.

They difficult to ward off, and adorned with swords in their hands, gladly drank the blood of the heroes of Śatrughna even while they were alive. Seeing that missile pervading (everything) and destroying all the warriors, he discharged, to send it back, the missile called Nārāyaṇa. That missile, presided over by Nārāyaṇa, in a moment, checked all of them. All of them, impelled by the demon, met with destruction. Then that angry demon Vidyunmālin took a sharp, fierce and strong trident to kill Śatrughna. Seeing Vidyunmālin coming with a trident in his hand, (Śatrughna) struck (him) on his arm with arrows resembling the crescent moon. With his arm cut off with those arrows he prepared himself to strike (Śatrughna) with his hand. (He said:) "O Śatrughna, you are (now) killed. Go. Who will be your protector?"

77-81. When he was talking like this, (Śatrughna) quickly cut off with arrows the head along with the ear-rings of that mighty hero. Seeing him (i.e. Vidyunmālin) with his head cut off, the valourous Ugradaṁṣṭra started striking Śatrughna served by the brave with his fist; but Śatrughna cut off his head with an arrow with a sharp horse-shoe-shaped head. All the heroes skilled in the use of weapons and missiles ran on the battlefield. Except the lord of the demons all with their life remaining (i.e. saved) went (away). Having saluted Śatrughna they gave (back) the horse snatched (away by them). Then were heard all around the sounds of lutes, the sounds of conches and the charming cries of victory of the brave soldiers.

CHAPTER THIRTYFIVE

Dialogue between Lomaśa and Āraṇyaka

Śeṣa said:

1-5. King Śatrughna, along with Puṣkala, obtained great joy on obtaining the horse taken away by the demons. Those warriors, with their bodies sprinkled with blood, so also Lakṣmī-

nidhi praised the great king full of energy to fight. When that great demon Vidyunmālin, difficult to conquer, was killed, all gods, O sage, gave up their fear and obtained happiness. The rivers became clean; and the sun became clear. Breezes sprinkled with scented water blew. The great heroes, with spotless lustre and of clean bodies seated in the chariots, became ready. All of them endowed with the good luck of victory said to the king:

The heroes said:

6-8. O you very intelligent one, luckily you have killed the demon Vidyunmālin, due to whose fear gods were frightened and were driven out of the heaven. Luckily the great horse of Raghunātha has been got (back); luckily you have obtained victory everywhere on the globe. O lord, release this charming horse having the speed of mind. Let there be no delay now, O you very intelligent one.

Śeṣa said:

9-14. Hearing these words of the heroes which were proper for the occasion, he, having praised them (with the words) 'Well, well', released the best horse. He that was well-protected by chariots, foot-soldiers, best horses and those who were proficient in the use of all weapons and missiles, went, when released, to the northern direction. O Vātsyāyana, listen to the account of what took place (in the case) of Śatrughna, which burns heaps of sins. He reached Revā's bank resorted to by hosts of sages. Her water was the fluid of the heap of sapphires under the pretext of water. He (i.e. Śatrughna) waited upon by the brave, saluted the respective (i.e. everyone of the) sages and followed the gem of the horse going at will. He went to that old hermitage made of the leaves of palāśa, sprinkled with the waves of Revā and the refuge of those who remove sins.

15. Śatrughna who did all deeds bringing merit and worldly prosperity, on seeing it, said to Sumati who knew everything and was proficient in political wisdom.

The king said:

16. O Minister, O you who are best among those who think,

tell me who am asking you, to whom this hermitage, which appears auspicious belongs.

Śeṣa said:

17. Hearing these words, Sumati, showing his affection, said to the king, with words accompanied by a bright smile.

Sumati said:

18-24. O great king, having seen this best sage, absorbed in all scriptures, we shall indeed have our sins removed. Therefore, bow down before him, and ask him. He who is extremely greedy of the honey from the lotuses in the form of Rāma's feet, will tell you everything. (Bow down before him) known by the name Āraṇyaka, the servant of the feet of Rāma, full of very severe penance and proficient in the significance of all sacred texts.

Hearing these words augmented by religious significance, he went along with a few servants to see him. (They were) Hanūmat, the brave Puṣkala, the best minister Sumati, Lakṣmīnidhi, Pratāpāgrya, Subāhu, and Sumada also. Noble-minded king Śatrughna, surrounded by these reached the hermitage to salute that best brāhmaṇa Āraṇyaka. Having gone there he with all the heroes who had bent down their necks in modesty, saluted the best ascetic.

25-27. Having seen all those kings led by Śatrughna, he then offered them respectful offering and water for washing their feet etc. along with fruits and roots. He said to all the kings: "Where had you gone together? O sinless ones, how have you gathered here? Tell (me) all that." O brāhmaṇa, having heard those words of the best sage, Sumati, skilled in speaking (proper) words, said (to him):

Sumati said:

28-29. By all (these) the horse of the king belonging to Raghu's family is being protected. The hero (Rāma) will perform a sacrifice furnished with all ingredients.

Hearing those words of (i.e. uttered by) them the best sage, as it were dispelling the entire darkness with the lustre of his teeth, said:

Āraṇyaka said:

30-34. What is the use of other sacrifices furnished with all ingredients, giving (but) little merit and giving perishable positions? Foolish people worship other (god), leaving Hari, the Raghu hero (i.e. Ramā), the lord of Ramā, giving a stable glorious position. A foolish man torments (himself) by sacrifices, abstract meditations and vows by leaving him who, even when merely remembered, removes the mountain of sins. Oh! see the folly and illusion of people (that) a man leaving the easy worship of Rāma, would practise (i.e. he practises) difficult (things). It gives liberation to men and removes all sins merely by being remembered. It is reflected upon by the meditating saints having desires.

35-40. Formerly with a desire to know the reality and thinking much about (how to find) a wise man, I went to many holy places. But nobody taught me the truth. Then, due to my great luck I came across the sage Lomaśa who had come (down to the earth) with a desire to visit the holy places. Having saluted that great sage who had a great (i.e. long) life and whose couple of feet was served by great meditating saints, I asked him (about the truth): "O lord, today (i.e. now) I have obtained the human existence, which is wonderful and difficult to obtain. What should one who desires to cross the fearful ocean of the worldly existence, do? Having thought, tell me if there is a vow, a gift, a prayer to be muttered, a sacrifice, or a deity, that would emancipate me from the ocean of the mundane existence. O lord of reflective thinking (i.e. greatest mediating saint), O You who are the master of the significance of all the scriptures, tell me that knowing which I shall by means of the ocean of your grace cross the fierce mundane existence."

41-49. Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) me, the best sage said: "O brāhmaṇa, listen attentively and with great faith. There are gifts, holy places, vows, voluntary religious observances and restraints. So also there are many abstract meditations, sacrifices giving (i.e. taking one to) heaven. O magnanimous one, I shall tell you a great secret which removes all sins and helps (one) to cross the ocean of the worldly existence. Listen to it. It is not to be told to an atheist, or to a non-

believer, so also to a censurer, or to a wicked man; it should not be given to the enemy (i.e. hater) of devotion. It (i.e. the secret) which is excellent and removes all misery, should be told to Rāma's devotee who is calm and free from lust and anger. There is no greater god than Rāma; there is no greater vow than (that in honour of) Rāma. There is no greater reflection than (on) Rāma; there is no greater sacrifice than (in honour of) Rāma. Having remembered him, having muttered prayers to him, and having worshipped him, a man gets the highest (position) and obtains great glory in this and the next world. When he is remembered, when he is mentally meditated upon, he who is the giver of all desired objects, gives (i.e. generates in the mind of the man) great devotion which helps him to cross the ocean of the mundane existence. Even a cāṇḍāla by remembering Rāma goes to (i.e. obtains) the highest position. Then what about those like you who are greatly devoted to the Vedas and (other) scriptures?

50-52. I have disclosed to you the secret of all the Vedas and (other) scriptures. Act as you would desire. Rāmacandra is the only god. His worship is the only vow. (Uttering) his name is the only hymn; and praising him is the only scripture. Therefore, worship the charming Rāmacandra by all means; so that the ocean of the mundane existence would be as trifling as a small puddle."

53-70. Having heard those words, I again put a question: "How is the god meditated upon by men? Or how is he worshipped by them? O you highly intelligent one, O you who know everything, tell me (all that) in detail, knowing which I shall be blessed in the three worlds, O best sage." Having heard these words of (i.e. uttered by) me, that Lomaśa, having reflected, told me everything preceded by the meditation on Rāma: "O best brāhmaṇa, O you sinless one, I shall tell you what you have asked me, as to how the lord of Rāma (i.e. Viṣṇu) burns (i.e. removes) the distress of the mundane existence. In the city of Ayodhyā, which is charming and adorned with a variegated pavilion, at the root of the desire-yielding tree giving all prosperity, one should meditate upon the charming Raghurāja (i.e. Rāma) seated upon an attractive throne, adorned with great emeralds, gold and jewels like the sapphire remov-

ing darkness by means of its lustre. (One should meditate upon Rāma) whose body is dark like dūrvā-blades, who is worshipped by god of gods, whose face condemns the beauty of the full moon on the full-moon night, whose forehead resembles the portion of the moon on the eighth day (of the month), who is rich with the beauty of dark hair, who is tinged with the jewels of his crown, who is adorned with beautiful ear-rings having the shape of crocodiles, who is beautified with lips shining with coral-like lustre, who is adorned with the row of teeth having the shape of the rays of the lord of the stars (i.e. the moon—i.e. having pointed teeth), whose mouth is beautified with a tongue sweet like the China rose, on which reside Vedas like the Ṛgveda along with sacred books ,who is adorned with a neck possessing the charm of a conch, who, the excellent one, possesses lofty and fleshy shoulders like those of a lion, who has long arms marked with armlets and bracelets hanging up to the knees and adorned with rings and diamonds, who has a very large chest beautified by the perfume of Lakṣmī and marked with beautiful marks like that of Śrīvatsa, who has a large belly with a large navel and adorned with a beautiful waist endowed with a jewelled girdle and special charm, who is adorned with spotless thighs and knees and with majesty, who is adorned with delicate feet marked with lines like a diamond-pin and a barley-shoot and fit to be reflected upon by the meditating saints. Having reflected upon and remembered him you will cross the ocean of the mundane existence. One worshipping him according to his own desire by means of sandal etc. obtains great prosperity in this world and the other world.

71. O great king, you asked me about the excellent meditation upon Rāma. I have told it to you. (With its help) cross the ocean of the worldly existence."

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

Lomaśa Narrates the Deeds of Rāma to Āraṇyaka

Śeṣa said:

1. The best brāhmaṇa, having heard this very important (advice) from Lomaśa, again asked that sage, who knew everything and who was best among the meditating saints.

Āraṇyaka said:

2-4. O best of sages, O you very intelligent one, tell me (what) I am asking you. Preceptors are full of compassion, and explain everything to their servant(s). O magnanimous one, who is that Rāma who is reflected upon by you everyday? What are his deeds? O best brāhmaṇa, tell me. Why has he taken the incarnation? Why is he born as a human being? (Please) quickly tell me all that to remove my doubt.

Śeṣa said:

5-7. Having heard these very charming words of the sage, Lomaśa narrated to him the wonderful good conduct of Rāma. Knowing that people have been merged into hell, the lord of the lords of abstract meditation, the charming highest lord, the ocean of kindness—knowing thus, descended along with Śrī in four ways to spread his glory in the world, by means of which (a man) would cross the terrible (mundane existence).

8-10. Formerly when the Tretā age came, Rāma, the descendant of Raghu, the full incarnation, having lotus-like eyes, was born in the solar dynasty. That Rāma had Lakṣmaṇa as his companion and the young (boy) had side-locks of hair on his temples. Due to the promise of their father, the two youths (i.e. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa), devoted to Viśvāmitra, were handed over (to Viśvāmitra) for the protection of his sacrifice by the king. They were restrained, (good) archers, brave, and were devoted to Viśvāmitra.

11-15a. To cause an obstacle to them a demoness named Tāṭakā met them in the fearful forest when they were going along their way. Rāma, the descendant of Raghu, sent by the sages' permission Tāṭakā (to face) the torture inflicted by Yama

by means of his practice of archery. By the touch of the sole of his foot Gautama's wife Ahalyā (who had been transformed into) a stone due to Indra's contact, again got her own form. When Viśvāmitra's sacrifice proceeded well, (Rāma), the best among Raghus, killed with great arrows Mārīca and Subāhu. He broke Śiva's bow that was in Janaka's house.

15b-17. When Rāma was fifteen years old, he married, according to (the proper rite of) marriage, the charming Sītā not born from the womb. Having had Sītā (as his wife), Rāma then became (i.e. regarded himself) fortunate. Then for twelve years he enjoyed with her. In his twenty-seventh year, he prepared (himself) for the rank of (i.e. for being consecrated as) an heir-apparent.

18-23a. Then Kaikeyī asked king (Daśaratha to grant) two boons: "By one of the two Rāma, having matted hair, should go away along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa for fourteen years. By the second, my (son) Bharata should be (consecrated as) the heir-apparent." The king sent away Rāma accompanied by Jānakī and Lakṣmaṇa. For three nights he took (only) water (and) on the fourth day he ate fruits. On the fifth (day) Rāma prepared an abode on the Citrakūṭa (mountain). In the thirteenth year, O great sage, Rāma disfigured the demoness Śūrpaṇakhā in Pañcavaṭī. When he was moving in the forest along with Jānakī, the demon (Rāvaṇa), due to the ripening of his sins, came to kidnap her.

23b-27. Then on the eighth day of the dark half of (the month of) Māgha, at the time called Vṛnda, Rāvaṇa took away Sītā left (alone) without Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. She, being taken away by him, wailed like an osprey: "O Rāma, Rāma, protect me who am taken away by a demon." As a hawk overcome with hunger would take a wailing quail similarly Rāvaṇa being under the influence of passion took away Janaka's daughter. When he was thus carrying away the daughter of Janaka, Jaṭāyu, the lord of birds, fought with the king of demons. Struck by Rāvaṇa he fell (down).

28-29. On the tenth day (of the first half of Mārgaśīrṣa) Sampāti told the monkeys about Sītā whom (he had seen) on the ninth day of the first half of Mārgaśīrṣa to be living in Rāvaṇa's house. On the eleventh day Hanūmat jumped from

the Mahendra mountain and saw her the same night in Laṅkā. During the remaining (part of that) night Hanūmat had the sight of Sītā.

30-34a. On the twelfth Hanūmat stayed on the śiṁśapā tree. On the same night (he told) a story for (generating) confidence (in Sītā's mind). Then his fight with Akṣa and others took place on the thirteenth day (of the first half of Mārgaśīrṣa). On the fourteenth day the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat) was bound by Indrajit with the missile presided over by Brahmā. He burnt Laṅkā with fire set to his tail. On the full-moon day the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat) returned to the Mahendra mountain. (Having spent) five days from the first day of the second fortnight of Mārgaśīrṣa on the way, Madhuvana was burnt (by the monkey) after again having come back. On the seventh day (a token of) recognition (from Sītā) and full report (of the adventure) was given (to Rāma).

34b-35. Rāma set out on the eighth day when there appeared the Uttarāphālgunī constellation and the time was (the auspicious) Vijayā, and when the sun had reached the middle of the sky (i.e. at mid-day). Having made a solemn declaration, Rāma went towards the southern direction: (His solemn declaration was:)

36-38a. "Even having crossed the ocean, I shall kill the lord of demons." Sugrīva was the companion of Rāma who proceeded towards the southern direction. After seven days his army encamped on (the shore of) the ocean. Rāma, along with his army encamped on (the shore of) the ocean from the first day to the third day (of the first half of Pauṣa).

38b-40a. On the fourth day Bibhīṣaṇa joined Rāma. Consultations took place for crossing the ocean on the fifth day. For four days Rāma undertook fasting to death. Then he obtained a boon from the ocean who advised to make a joint effort.

40b-42. (The construction of the bridge) was begun on the tenth day, and was completed on the thirteenth day. On the fourteenth day Rāma encamped his army on the Suvela mountain. From the full-moon day to the third (of the dark fortnight) the army of the lord of the monkeys crossed the ocean and with Lakṣmaṇa besieged Laṅkā for (getting back) Sītā.

43-45. The encampment lasted for eight days, beginning with the third day and ending with the tenth. On the eleventh day Śuka and Sāraṇa came (to Rāma). On the twelfth day of the dark half of Pauṣa, the counting of (the soldiers in) the army was done. The lord of the best monkeys quickly described the army. For three days from the thirteenth day to the new-moon day Rāvaṇa assessed (the soldiers in) his army and showed inclination to fighting.

46-52a. On the first day of the bright half of Māgha Aṅgada went (to Rāvaṇa) as (Rāma's) envoy. Then Sītā was shown an illusory head of her husband (by Rāvaṇa). For seven days from the second of Māgha to the eighth (of Māgha), a confused battle took place between the demons and the monkeys. On the night of the ninth day of the bright half of Māgha Indrajit bound Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with the serpent-noose. When the lordly monkeys were perplexed and were completely nervous, Pavana, on the tenth day, muttered into Rāma's ear his real form for freeing him from the serpent-noose. Then there was the arrival of Garuḍa on the eleventh day. On the twelfth day Dhūmrākṣa was killed (by Rāma). He himself killed Kampana in the battle on the thirteenth day. From the fourteenth of the bright half of Māgha to the first day of the dark half, Nīla (after fighting with Prahasta) killed him after three days.

52b-58a. From the second day of the dark half of Māgha till the fourth day, in the fierce fight that lasted for three days Rāma made Rāvaṇa flee the battlefield. From the fifth day to the eighth day Rāvaṇa woke up Kumbhakarṇa. Then he ate food for four days. After six days—from the ninth to the fourteenth —Rāma killed in the battle Kumbhakarṇa who had eaten up many monkeys. On the new-moon day there was a temporary cessation of hostilities due to grief. During the four days from the first day of the bright half of Phālguna to the fourth day five demons—Bisatantu and others—were killed. In the same way Atikāya was killed (in the battle that took place) from the fifth to the seventh. During (the battle that lasted for) five days from the eighth day to the twelfth day (the two demons) Nikumbha and Kumbha were killed. Then, after three days Makarākṣa was killed.

58b-59. On the second day of the dark half of Phālguna Indrajit won (the battle). There was a temporary cessation of hostilities for five days from the third day to the seventh day due to the soldiers being intensely occupied in fetching the herbs.

60-61a. Then, in the battle that lasted for five days (from the eighth day) to the thirteenth day Lakṣmaṇa struck Indrajit who was well-known for his power and valour. Temporarily ceasing the hostilities, on the fourteenth day Rāvaṇa took initiation (i.e. performed a sacrifice).

61b-70a. Rāvaṇa went to fight on the new-moon day. When from the first day of the bright half of Caitra to the fifth day Rāvaṇa was fighting for five days, there was a great killing of the demons. Mahāpārśva and others were killed (in the battle that took place) from the sixth day of Caitra to the eighth day. On the ninth day of the bright half of Caitra Lakṣmaṇa was pierced (i.e. struck) by a missile (discharged by Indrajit). Rāma who was full of anger made Rāvaṇa flee. The son of Añjanī (i.e. Hanūmat) brought the Droṇa mountain for (treating) Lakṣmaṇa (with the herbs on the mountain). The demons temporarily ceased fighting on the night of the tenth. On the eleventh day the charioteer Mātali sent by Indra devoutly presented Rāma in the battle with a chariot (sent by Indra). From the twelfth day (of the bright half) to the fourteenth day of the dark half i.e. for eighteen days Rāma fought with Rāvaṇa in a single combat in chariots. In the battle that was fierce Rāma obtained victory. During the eighty seven days of the war which began on the second day of the bright half of Māgha and continued up to the fourteenth day of the dark half of Caitra, there was a cessation of hostilities for fifteen days—thus the (actual) war took place for seventy-two days. The obsequial ceremonies of Rāvaṇa and others took place on the new-moon day. Rāma stayed on the battlefield on the first day of Vaiśākha.

70b-75. On the second day of Vaiśākha Bibhīṣaṇa was consecrated on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of Laṅkā. On the third day took place the purification of Sītā and obtaining boons from gods. Having, after a long time, killed the lord of Laṅkā, he, the elder brother of Lakṣmaṇa, accepted the auspicious Jānakī, afflicted by the demon (viz. Rāvaṇa) and taking her (with him) with great love, he returned. On the fourth day of

Vaiśākha Rāma got into the Puṣpaka and through the sky again came back to Ayodhyā. When the fourteenth year was complete Rāma along with his group stayed in Bharadvāja's hermitage on the fifth day of Vaiśākha. On the sixth day he met Bharata at Nandigrāma. On the seventh the descendant of Raghu (i.e. Rāma) was consecrated (as the king) in Ayodhyā.

76-79a. Maithilī (i.e. Sītā) lived without Rāma in the house of Rāvaṇa for eleven months and fourteen days. Rāma ruled (i.e. was consecrated as the king) when he was forty-two years old. At that time Sītā had completed thirty-three years. That lord Rāma being delighted entered the city Ayodhyā at the end of the fourteenth year and with his brothers ruled there.

79b-83. When he is thus ruling, Agastya born of a pitcher, the priest best among the eloquent, will come to the lord of the Raghu (dynasty). At his words (i.e. suggestion) he will perform a horse-sacrifice. O you of a good vow, his horse will come to your hermitage. His delighted warriors will (also) come to your hermitage. In front of them you will narrate pleasing tales about Rāma. O best of brāhmaṇas, along with them you will go to Ayodhyā. Seeing Rāma having eyes like lotuses in Ayodhyā, you (will) be just at that moment crossing the ocean of the worldly existence."

84-86a. Having thus spoken to me, that best sage Lomaśa, (most) intelligent of all, said: "What do you want to ask (now)?" Then I spoke proper (words): "Due to your grace I have known all the wonderful deeds of Rāma. By your favour I shall obtain the lotus-feet of Rāma." The lord of sages saluted by me went (his way).

86b-92. By his favour I have secured the worship of the feet of Rāma. That I (i.e. such as I am, I), everyday, repeatedly remember Rāma's feet. Being careful, I shall again and again sing his deeds. I shall purify other people by the enchanting song. With a desire to see him and repeatedly remembering the sage's words I shall be delighted. On the earth I am fortunate, I am blessed, I am lucky (that) I shall have a desire to see Rāma. Therefore, by all means that charming Rāma should be worshipped, for he (alone) should be saluted by all with a desire to cross the ocean of the mundane existence. Therefore, (tell me) why you have come here. Which king, a religious-minded

one, will perform the great sacrifice, viz. the horse-sacrifice? You should tell me all that now; and should go to look after the horse. You should, repeatedly remembering Rāma's feet, remember them (constantly).

93. Hearing these words of the sage, they were wonder-struck. Remembering Raghunātha, they said to sage Āraṇyaka.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

Sage Āraṇyaka Goes to Viṣṇu's Heaven

Śeṣa said:

1. By the best sage they were asked (about) the wonderful deeds of Rāma. Regarding themselves as blessed and fortunate they spoke with respect.

The people said:

2-5. On seeing you we are now purified, since by (telling us) the account of Rāma you are purifying people (like) us. Listen to the true statement. You are the best among the brāhmaṇic sages. We shall tell all that you have asked us. By the words (i.e. at the suggestion) of Agastya Rāma is performing a very great sacrifice furnished with all ingredients for removing (the sin due to) the killing of a brāhmaṇa. We who all look after him have come along with the horse to your hermitage. O very intelligent one, know it.

6-11. Hearing these pleasant words, an elixir of life, the brāhmaṇa, devoted to Rāma was highly delighted. "Today the tree of my desire for glory has become fruitful. Today my mother who gave me birth, is blessed. Today I have obtained kingdom free from troublesome fellows. The treasures are very rich today. Today the gods are very much pleased. I have today obtained the fruit of maintaining the sacred fire to which oblations were offer-ed, that I shall see the pair of the lotus-like feet of Rāmacandra.

That extremely charming lord of Ayodhyā, who is everyday meditated upon in my heart, will indeed be seen by me. Hanūmat, embracing me, will ask me about my well-being. The best one, on seeing my great devotion, will be pleased."

12-13. Hearing these words, Hanūmat, the best of the monkeys, clasped the pair of the feet of the sage Āraṇyaka. "O lord, O brāhmaṇa-sage, I am (Rāma's) servant standing before you. O lord of sages, know me, Rāma's servant, resembling a dust-particle."

14-17. When he was speaking like this, the sage, who was highly delighted, embraced Hanūmat adorned with his devotion to Rāma. Both were full of love, both were bathing with nectar (as it were). Covered (by each other) they appeared as it were drawn in a picture. They sat there and told very pleasant stories. Their minds were full of love for the lotus-like feet of Raghunātha. Hanūmat said various charming words to that excellent sage Āraṇyaka who was full of the thought about the feet of Rāma:

18-24. "O lord, this is the great diamond-like offspring of Daśaratha's family. He is Rāma's brother; is very brave. This Śatrughna salutes you. He killed Lavaṇa who was fearful to the entire world; and he made all sages, of excellent penance, happy. This is (Bharata's son) named Puṣkala, who is served by very great heroes and who now conquered many great heroes on the battlefield. Know this one of many merits and of great power to be Rāma's minister, dear to Raghupati (i.e. Rāma) like his own life, knowing everything and proficient in dharma. This is Subāhu, who is very fierce, who is a conflagration to the families of the enemies, and is a bee (howering) round the lotus-like feet of Rāma. This one of great fame salutes you. This Sumada too, who, due to service of Rāma's feet given (i.e. assigned) to him by Pārvatī, has now achieved the great crossing over the ocean of the mundane existence. This Satyavān who having heard from his servant that the horse (of Rāma) had come, offered his kingdom (to Rāma). He is saluting you (by prostrating himself) on the ground."

25-29. Having heard these words, sage Āraṇyaka, having embraced (them) with respect, welcomed them by offering fruits etc. They, very diligent ones, being delighted, having performed their daily morning rites in Revā, stayed in the hermitage of the

excellent sage. Having put the sage with his servants in a man-drawn vehicle, Śatrughna reached Ayodhyā where Rāma had taken his abode. He (i.e. the sage) seeing from a distance the city in which the king of the solar dynasty lived, quickly (got down from the vehicle and) went on foot with a desire to see the lord of Raghus. He reached the beautiful city of Ayodhyā adorned with people. A thousand of desires got (into his mind) for seeing Rāma.

30-32. There on the bank of Sarayū adorned with a pavilion, he saw Rāma who was dark like dūrvā-blades, whose eyes had the beauty of lotuses, who was holding on his waist a charming deer-horn endowed with beauty, was surrounded by hosts of sages led by Vyāsa, was well-served by the brave (soldiers), was surrounded by Bharata and Sumitrā's son (Lakṣmaṇa), was giving to the groups of the poor whatever they asked for.

33-36. Having seen him, (the sage) called Āraṇyaka regarded himself as blessed. "My eyes, resembling lotus-petals, are seeing Rāma. Today my knowledge of all sacred texts has become very significant, since, knowing Śrī Rāma, I have reached this city of Ayodhyā." He, delighted, saying these and many other words, and shining with his body very much delighted on seeing the feet of Rāma, went near Ramā's lord who was extremely inaccessible even to other lords of deep meditation, devoted to reflection. "Today I am lucky (that) Rāma's feet will come within the range of my sight (i.e. will be seen by me)." Saying these charming words (he stood) seeing Rāma.

37-40. Rāma too, seeing the best brāhmaṇa glowing with his own lustre, having the form of penance, got up. The great Rāmacandra saluted his feet for a long time. "O brāhmaṇa god, you have today purified my body." Saying these words, the lord, before whose feet (the lights of) the gems on the crowns of gods and demons bending before him were waved, fell at his feet. The best brāhmaṇa, of a great penance, held the best king between his arms, and embraced the dear lord.

41-46. The son of Kauśalyā (i.e. Rāma), the lord, having put him on a high jewelled seat, washed his pair of feet with water. And Hari (i.e. Rāma) himself took (i.e. put) that water, used for washing the sage's feet, on his (own) head, saying: "Today with my attendants and (members of) my family I am purified. Having

smeared him with sandal (-paste), he gave him a milch cow; and he, served by the lord of gods, said (these) charming words: "O lord, I would perform the sacrifice called Vāji-medha (i.e. horse-sacrifice). That will be today fully completed due to the arrival of your feet. Today, sacrifice (called) Aśvamedha (i.e. horse-sacrifice), purified by your feet, will destroy my sin due to the killing of a brāhmaṇa." To him, served by the lord of kings the sage Āraṇyaka smilingly spoke thus in sweet words:

47-58. "O lord, O king friendly to brāhmaṇas, your words are proper. O great king, the brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas, are (but) your forms. O king, when you will perform the auspicious act like worshipping brāhmaṇas, all the (other) kings will worship a brāhmaṇa. O great king, the words which you uttered, viz. "I shall perform a pure sacrifice to remove (the sin of) a brāhmaṇa's murder" are but laughable. (Even) a fool void (i.e. ignorant) of all sacred texts, would go to the highest position after having crossed the ocean of all sins (merely) by remembering your name. It is clear that the essential meaning of all the Vedas and old narratives is that Rāma's name is remembered to overcome sins. O Rāmacandra, as long as your name is not distinctly uttered, sins like those of brāhmaṇa murders, roar. O great king, having heard your name, the elephants in the form of great sins run away with a desire to find a place somewhere (to hide themselves). Therefore, O Rāma, O you whose sight is meritorious, how can there be a killing by you? A men, having heard your good (i.e. auspicious) account, instantly becomes pure. Formerly in the Kṛta age I heard the words from the mouth of (i.e. uttered by) sages knowing ancient accounts and residing on the bank of Gaṅgā: 'As long as men do not utter the charming name of Rāma, there are fears for those very sinful cowardly men'. Therefore, now I am blessed; O Rāmacandra, the destruction of my mundane existence has now become easy due to my having seen you." He worshipped the sage who was speaking like this. All the sages uttered the words, 'Well, Well'.

Śeṣa said:

59-67. O Vātsyāyana, best among the sages, and greatly devoted to Rāma, a great wonder took place there. Listen to it when I am telling (it to you). When he saw the great king Rāma

(just) as he had seen him in his meditation, he, who was extremely delighted, said to the best sages: "O best sages, listen to my very pleasant words. Who will be (i.e. who is) so very lucky like me on the earth? There is none like me; there was none born like me; there will be none like me, since Rāmabhadra having saluted me inquired about my (i.e. offered me a) welcome. He the dust of whose feet is always sought for by the scriptures has today after drinking the water (flowing) from my feet regarded himself pure." When he was speaking like this, Brāhmaṇic (lustre) burst out (from his body) entered (the body of) the lord of the Raghus. (The sage) when all people were watching in the pavilion on the bank of Sarayū, obtained absorption (into the deity, viz. Rāma), which (absorption) is difficult to be secured by the meditating saints. In the sky there was at that time the sound of musical instruments. There was (also) the sound of lutes. Shower of flowers fell in front of them who were watching the interesting wonder. The sages also, having seen it, praised the best sage (saying): "The best sage is fortunate, since he has secured residence in the body of Rāma."

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

Getting Back the Horse from the Possession of an Under-Water Female

Sūta said:

1. Having heard this account, the noble-minded Vātsyāyana obtained great joy and said to the lord of the serpents.

Vātsyāyana said:

2-5. O lord of the serpents, I who listen to the story of Raghunātha who is famous for destroying the affliction of his devotees, am not (at all) satisfied. The great sage Āraṇyaka possessing (the knowledge of) the Vedas, who cast his perishable body after seeing Raghunātha, is blessed. From there where did the king's horse go? By whom was he restrained? How was the

glory of the lord of Rāma produced there? O lord of serpents, tell me all the truth, since you are omniscient. You hold the body of Viṣṇu; you actually possess his form.

Vyāsa said:

6. Hearing these words, he, with his heart delighted, narrated Rāma's deeds highlighting his so many (innumerable) virtues.

Śeṣa said:

7-16. O brāhmaṇa sage, you are well asking about Raghunātha's virtues by expressing a desire to hear them, by regarding them as not having been heard, though you have repeatedly heard them. From there the horse, surrounded by many soldiers, went out to the charming bank of Revā resorted to by hosts of sages. Then all the soldiers, skilled in fighting and carefully watching the path of (i.e. taken by) him, proceeded wherever the horse (moved). Then the horse holding a golden note on his forehead and with his body worshipped, went to a pool of water in Revā full of unfordable water. Then the excellent horse of Rāmacandra plunged into water. At that time all the great heroes were wonder-struck. They just said to one another: "How can the horse be regained? Who will go into the water to bring the horse of great splendour?" When, thus dejected, they were consulting one another, the lord of the Raghu (family) arrived there with hundreds of heroes. Seeing all of them dejected, the crest-jewel of the brave called Śatrughna, asked them with a voice deep-sounding like that of the clouds: "Why do you all today stay in groups in the water? Where is Raghunātha's horse adorned with the golden note? Has it been drowned into the water? Or has it been snatched by some haughty person? Tell me that quickly as to how you are confused."

Śeṣa said:

17. Having heard these words of the best (descendant of) Raghu, the king, the heroes told everything to the crest-jewel of the brave.

The men said:

18-22. O lord, we do not know. For a while he was in the water. Then he plunged (into the water). Your charming horse did not come (up). You yourself (should) go there, and bring the horse quickly. O you very intelligent one, we would go there with you.

Hearing these words of the soldiers, the descendant of Raghu (i.e. Śatrughna) was dejected on seeing the men ready to swim in the water. He said to the chief minister: "What should we do hereafter? Tell (me) how the horse will (i.e. can) be brought (back). Which brave ones should be employed to find out the horse in the water? Tell me who will bring back the horse and by what means."

23-26. Hearing these words of the king, Sumati, the best minister, said, as it were delighting Śatrughna, what was proper for the occasion: "O lord, you, of wonderful deeds, have glorious power. It is clear, you have the power to go to the nether world through water. Another thing is: Puṣkala the magnanimous one, has also the power. So also Hanūmat engaged in serving the feet of Rāma (has the power). Therefore, you three (should) go and certainly bring the horse from the place where the sacrificial horse of the intelligent Raghunātha might be."

Śeṣa said:

27-32. Hearing these words, Śatrughna, the killer of the enemy's warriors, himself, along with Hanūmat and Puṣkala entered the water. When he entered the water, he saw a city. The city was rich with the beauty of many gardens and immeasurable. He saw there Rāma's horse well adorned with the golden note, and tied to a golden pillar decked with rubies. There excellent ladies having attractive forms were waiting upon a beautiful lady comfortably seated upon a couch. Seeing them all the ladies said to their queen: "These (individuals) of a small height, young and with well-nourished bodies will be the best object of your food. The blood of these men when they die (i.e. when they will be killed) will be sweet."

33-36. Hearing these words of her female servants, that

sinless beautiful lady, gesticulating her face with her eye-brow; laughed a little. At that time the three shining with the beauty of their armours, having helmets, and endowed with valour and bravery, reached there. O brāhmaṇa, seeing there the ladies endowed with the wealth of beauty, they expressed their amazement: "What is this great thing being seen?" With the feet (of the lady) shining with the lustre of the gems in their crowns, all the magnanimous ones saluted the divine, excellent, ladies.

37-39. That beautiful young lady, the greatest of all, asked those men: "Who are you that have come here? How is it that you men are holding bows? My place is greatly deluding and is inaccessible to all gods. No one that has come here ever returns. To which king does this horse belong? How is it that the horse is fanned with chowries? (How is it) rich in beauty with the golden note? You should tell (everything) to me."

Śeṣa said:

40-43. Having thus heard her words full of deluding manner, Hanūmat, with his fear gone and smiling, said: "We are the servants of the king, the crest-jewel of the three worlds. This group of the three worlds salutes (him) the crest-jewel of all gods. Know the horse to belong to Rāmabhadra who is proceeding to (perform) a horse-sacrifice. Release our horse. O you beautiful lady, how (i.e. why) has he been tied? We are skilled in (the use of) all missiles; we are proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles. Killing those who obstruct (our) horse, we shall forcibly take (back the horse)."

44-49. Hearing these words of the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat), that excellent lady, seated in a hollow, proficient in (using proper) words, laughed, and said: "Nobody is able to free this horse brought by me, even (if he fights) with sharp points of arrows that are blazing up, (even for) a myriad of years. But I am the servant of the lotus-like feet of Rāma. I do his work. I shall not seize the horse of that intelligent king of kings. I, who took away the good horse, have committed great rudeness. Let that Rāmacandra, the protector, who loves his devotees, pardon me. You, the men of him, the protector, are afflicted for that horse. O best one, ask for a boon difficult to be secured even by gods, so that the best man would forgive me the severe harm

(done to him). Giving up all bashfulness, choose the best boon."

50-52. Hearing her great words, Hanūmat said to her: "Due to the grace of Raghunātha everything that we have is excellent. Still, I ask for an excellent boon. Give that one, desired by my mind: Let Raghunātha be our lord in every existence, and let us be his servants doing his work." Hearing these words of the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat), that lady laughed and said sweet words, honoured for their merit:

53-63. "O servants of the lord of (the) Raghu (family), whatever is desired by you, which is difficult to be obtained by deities, will take place. There is no doubt. Yet, I who slighted (Rāma) shall give (you) a boon to please Ragunātha. My words would come true. Later king Vīramaṇi, accompanied by great heroes and protected by Śiva, will seize your horse. O you very powerful ones, take a great missile from me to conquer him. You, great Śatrughna, should fight with him in a single combat in chariots. When, in the battle, you will discharge this missile; he, being purified by it, will again realise the true nature of Rāma. Realising him, and giving the horse (back to you) he will fall at your feet. Therefore, take from me the missile destroying the enemy." Hearing that (i.e. those words), Rāma's brother (i.e. Śatrughna), facing the north, and with his body purified, received that wonderful missile given by that female devotee. Having received that missile, he became one with great might, destroyer of the enemies, difficult to be assailed and propitiated, and a hook to drive the elephants in the form of his enemies. Having saluted her, Śatrughna, the best among the descendants of Raghu, took the best horse, and from the water went (up) to the bank of Revā, fit for comforts. Having seen him, all the soldiers, with their bodies delighted and full of joy, praised him (as): "Well (done), well (done)!" and asked him about the coming out (i.e. as to how the horse came out of the water). Hanūmat told them about the great (i.e. important) coming (out) of the horse, and also about having received the boon. They too, hearing (it) were delighted.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

The Seizure of the Horse by Vīramaṇi's Son

Śeṣa said:

1-8. When everywhere the tabors were sounded and when everywhere there were the sounds of lutes, the horse was released. From there he (went) to Devapura fashioned by gods, in which men's houses laughed, as it were, (i.e. were bright) by means of the constructions of crystal walls at the spotless Vindhya mountain resorted to by elephants. Even the houses of the subjects (i.e. ordinary people) were made of silver here (i.e. in this city). Here the ornamental ruby gateways were girdled by variegated gems; in every house there were attractive, most beautiful women that with side-glances attracted the hearts of men. Here, O brāhmaṇa, in every house rubies were seen to have been fixed in the good (i.e. beautiful) floors, as it were, to vie with the lips of the women. In every house the pleasure-mountains fashioned with sapphires produced the hope of (the arrival of) clouds in (the minds of) the peacocks having plumages. In this city swans, restrained on the crystal-floors in the houses were not afraid of a cloud and did not remember the Mānasa lake. (In it) at the abode of Śiva darkness was always dispelled by the moonlight; (so) the men there did not distinguish between the bright half and the dark half (of the month).

9-11. There the great king Vīramaṇi, the chief among the righteous (kings), ruled over a large kingdom full of all enjoyments. His very brave and powerful son named Rukmāṅgada (once) went to a forest to sport with women of charming bodies. The sound of their anklets and also the sound of their bracelets attracted the mind of Cupid (himself); then what to say about others!

12-16. He (i.e. Rukmāṅgada) went to the great forest which was full of trees with good flowers, where Sadāśiva had made his abode, and which shone with the six seasons. In it the many campaka trees adorned with blooming buds caused affliction in the hearts of passionate men, when they were seen by the men. (There) the mango trees, having crores of sprouts, were bent with fruits etc. (There were) the nāga (trees), the punnāga trees,

the śāla (trees), the tāla (trees) and the tamāla (trees). In it the cooings of cuckoos were heard. The good jasmine (creepers) had always lost their sleep (i.e. were blossoming) due to the humming of bees. (There) the groups of the pomgranate (trees) were linked to the karṇikāra (trees); the rows of the sylvan trees shone with the ketakī and kanakī trees.

17-20. With his mind full of joy, singing sweetly and indistinctly, and having a body—the abode of charm—he, with women on all sides having a strong desire to talk sweetly and having raised breasts, entered the forest through passion and free from fear. Some pleased him with their knowledge of dancing, some (pleased) him with their singing arts, some with clever words; others, being intoxicated, pleased him with the signs (i.e. knittings) of their eye-brows. The women made him happy with their skill in embracing. Having collected flowers with them he, having Cupid's body, praising them with tender words, adorned those women.

21-23. When the intelligent king of kings was passing his time like this, that extremely charming horse went to that region of the forest. The women seeing him, on whose forehead was arranged (i.e. put) the golden note, who resembled Gaṅgā (in colour), whose body was tawny due to the reddish saffron, who was uniform in speed which excelled that of the wind said (the following) to their lord. The women had a tawny complexion like the interior of a lotus. They had set back the beauty of corals afraid of their red lips, with their red lips. Their faces were beautiful due to the laughter meted out by the rows of their teeth. They were lustrous due to their seductive eyes resembling Cupid's arrows.

The women said:

24. O darling, who is this great horse adorned only with the golden note? To whom does he, endowed with loveliness, belong? Seize him with your might.

Śeṣa said:

25-26. Hearing those words spoken (by the women), he having charming and sportive eyes, easily seized the horse with only one hand resembling a lotus. Having read the golden note

having clear letters, he seized him, and again said these words to the women.

Rukmāṅgada said:

27-32. On the earth there is none else like my father in valour and wealth. How can that king Rāma show haughty disregard of him? Let my very mighty father whom Rudra, the holder of the trident, always protects, whom gods, demons, yakṣas salute with their heads having jewels (bowed), perform the horse-sacrifice. Let this (horse) go to the stable. Let my soldiers tie him.

Hearing these words, the charming women had their faces joyful, and embraced their lover. The great son of king Vīramaṇi, seizing the horse, entered with his wives the city with great enthusiasm. When the sounds of the tabors that were beaten, were loud, he, being praised on all sides by the bards, went to the great house (i.e. palace) of his father.

33-37. He told him about his having seized Rāma's wonderful horse released for the horse-sacrifice, moving freely and protected by Śatrughna endowed with great power. The great, very intelligent king Vīramaṇi, having heard his words, did not very much approve that deed of him. Taking the seizure of that horse which was brought (to him by his son) like a thief's act and bringing him (to Śiva) he told lord Śiva, of wonderful deeds, having a lady (i.e. Pārvatī) as the half (part) of his body, having the moon for decorating his body. The great king Vīramaṇi honoured by the great, having condemned the deed done by his son, consulted him.

Śiva said:

38-44. O king, your son who took away the great horse of the intelligent Rāmacandra, has done a wonderful deed. Today a great war deluding gods and demons, with the great king Śatrughna, the only protector of a crore of heroes, appears (imminent). Your son has carried away (the horse)—the constituent of the sacrifice—of that Rāma who is held by me in my heart, and who is spoken (about) with my tongue (by me). But in the battle there will be a great gain, since we shall see the

lotus-like feet of Rāma, which are waited upon by me. Now a great effort must be done to protect the horse. They will forcibly take this horse, though protected by me. Therefore, O great king, with modesty you should (first) give along with the kingdom, the horse and food and then see the pair of his feet.

Having heard these words of Śiva, the best king said to him, whose pair of lotus-like feet were adorable (even) to Indra and others.

Vīramaṇi said:

45-50. This is the duty of kṣatriyas to preserve valour. He is eager to surpass it by the sacrifice called horse (-sacrifice). Therefore whosoever is possessed of self-respect, has to maintain his own valour, by doing, as is possible, a deed, (even) spending (i.e. harming) his (own) body. Everything is done by (my) son since he has seized the horse. He has angered king Rāma. (So) O lord, do what is proper for the occasion. It would certainly not be an act to be done by kṣatriyas that he (i.e. a kṣatriya) overcome with fear, should all of a sudden, salute the feet of his enemy. The enemies laugh at him (and say): "This mean king is a coward. He is insignificant; he, the mean one, being overcome with fear like a common man, has bowed (before me)." Therefore, when the fight is imminent, you should think and do whatever is proper and should protect your devotee.

Śeṣa said:

51-56. Hearing these words, Śiva laughed, and spoke words in a voice deep-sounding like a cloud, and infatuating his mind: "Even if the thirty-three crore gods are present, who would take the horse from you when I am your protector. If Rāma comes and shows himself to me, then I shall salute his very delicate feet. One should not fight with one's lord. (Doing so) is said to be a very evil course. Other heroes are (insignificant) like blades of grass. They are not capable of doing anything. Therefore, O best of kings, fight when I, your protector, am well-settled. Who would take (away) the horse even if the three worlds come together."

Śeṣa said:

Hearing those great words of Candracūḍa (i.e. Śiva) the king who took pleasure in fighting was very much delighted in his mind.

CHAPTER FORTY

Śatrughna Resolves to Fight Against Vīramaṇi

Śeṣa said :

1-7. Looking for king Rāma's horse the great king's soldiers endowed with great power (or army) came (there). (They said:) "Where is the horse? Who has taken him? How is it that he is not seen? Who, a very dull one, will go to Yama's city after having (i.e. because of his having) taken the horse?" While the soldiers of Raghu were searching the course of the horse, the great king surrounded by a large army came (there). He asked all his servants: "Now where is my horse? How is it that the horse, adorned with the golden note is not seen?" Hearing these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, the servants who were following the horse, said: "The horse having the mind's speed has been snatched away by someone into the forest. Therefore, even though we know the path well, the horse is not noticed. Therefore, O lord, an effort should be made now to get (back) the horse." Hearing their words, Śatrughna, the killer of his enemies, and having a fascinating form, asked Sumati:

Śatrughna said :

8. Which king stays here? How did he secure the horse? How much is the power (or army) of the king, who has today taken away my horse?

Sumati said :

9-12. O king, this is Devapura fashioned by the lord himself. It is like the Kailāsa (mountain) inaccessible (even) to hosts of

the army, well joined together. In it rules the very brave and valourous king Vīramaṇi, protected by Śiva, and he is ruling justly. He, Śiva who is the destroyer of the whole universe, (but) who always lets loose (his) partiality for his devotee, is won over (by the king) by means of his devotion. So if the horse is taken, there will be a great war. Let the good ones, being careful, protect the army.

13-16. Hearing this, that Śatrughna, the very glorious one, and the crest-jewel of all kings, waited (i.e. got ready to fight) after arranging the army. When he having consultations with his good minister (Sumati), waited comfortably, the divine sage (Nārada), eager (to see) the battle, came there. Having seen the sage, the abode of austerities, that had arrived there, Śatrughna got up (from his seat) and seating him on a seat, offered him a respectful offering. He, skilled in speaking, pleasing Nārada the best sage, with words, said to him pleased with the welcome (offered to him):

Śatrughna said :

17-19. O highly intelligent brāhmaṇa, tell me where my horse is. My servants, experienced in their duty, cannot trace his course. Tell (me the name of) that insolent kṣatriya who has taken (away) my horse. O you abode of penance, how will the horse be got (back by us)?

Hearing these words of Śatrughna, Nārada, sounding the lute and repeatedly singing Rāma's account, said:

Nārada said :

20-24. O king, this is Devapura. Vīramaṇi is the great king there. His son, who was in the forest, has seized your best horse. Today you will wage a very fierce battle (against him). Here (i.e. in this battle) soldiers having might and valour will fall. Therefore, O very powerful one, you should remain here with great effort. Make an array to which access is difficult for the enemy's soldiers. O king, in it you will have victory over the best king with difficulty. Who would defeat Rāma even on the entire earth?

Speaking like this, the brāhmaṇa disappeared, and remained in the sky watching the very fierce battle like the one between gods and demons.

Śeṣa said:

25-26. Then king Vīramaṇi, the crest-jewel of all brave men, asked his general, very eminent and brave among the enemies, to proclaim loudly by beating the war-drum; and told him with deep sounding words:

Vīramaṇi said:

27-31. O general, give the order (with the beating) of the war-drum in my beautiful city. Hearing it, let my well-equipped (heroes) march against Śatrughna.

Hearing the words of Vīramaṇi, the general at that time made the proclamation with the war-drum making a great sound. In every house and on the road the sound of the war-drum was heard: "Let all the heroes present in the capital march (against) Śatrughna. Those who looking upon themselves as brave disobey the order of the king, even though they may be sons or brothers, should be killed by the king's order. Let the heroes listen to the sound (which is produced) when the war-drum is beaten. Having heard it, they should, without delay, perform their duty."

Śeṣa said:

32-34. The best heroes, having heard the sound of the war-drum, with their bodies decorated with golden armours and with the interior of their hearts delighted by the festival of fight, went to the best king. Some, having put on beautiful helmets on their heads, and very charming due to the armours, and (thus) crores of them well adorned, went (to the king). The furious ones, as a result of the king's message, went (to the king), in chariots to which two horses looking beautiful due to gems and gold were yoked.

35-45. All of them obeying the command of the king went riding very charming horses to the king's abode. Rukmāṅgada also, who was well adorned with a distinguished golden armour and a helmet, got into his chariot having mind's speed. His

younger brother Śubhāṅgada, having put on his body an excellent armour full of (i.e. decked with) big gems, went to (participate in) the festival of fight. The king's brother Vīrasiṁha, proficient in the use of all weapons and missiles went there by the king's order, for that was a royal order. The king's sister's son also who was known as Balamitra, equipped with an armour and a sword, went to the king's palace. His great general Ripuvāra, making ready the army with its four constituents, reported to the king. Then king Vīramaṇi got into the best chariot full of all weapons and missiles and high due to having high wheels made of gems. Then in the ocean of the heroes the sound of conches, as if well impelling the cowardly warriors to fight, was heard. Kettle-drums sounded by auspicious musicians were beaten on all sides. The troops of him who proceeded to fight, stood there. All (the soldiers) had averted the evil by recitation of hymns; all were adorned with all ornaments. All fully equipped with missiles and weapons went to the battlefield. The mountains and caves were filled with the sounds of kettle-drums and conches. Is it that their sound went to call those who stayed in heaven?

46-48. When that din took place, the great king Vīramaṇi, full of enthusiasm to fight, went to the battlefield. When, after arriving at the battlefield full of chariots and foot-soldiers, he remained there, his army went there like the ocean to wash away the (enemy's) men from that place. Having seen that army full of warriors fighting from chariots, proficient in (the use of) weapons, and making a great noise, the king (i.e. Śatrughna) said to Sumati:

Śatrughna said :

49-50. The powerful Vīramaṇi who had seized our horse, has again come with a great army having four divisions. How should the battle be fought? Who, fierce with might, will fight? Show all those heroes to me, and (show me also) how the desired victory would be had.

Sumati said :

51-54. O lord, that great king, endowed with devotion to Śiva and surrounded by a huge army, has come to fight. Now, let the hero Puṣkala knowing the use uf great missiles fight. Let

other warriors like Nīlaratna, proficient in fighting (fight). O innocent one, you should fight with Śiva or with the king. He, of a great power and valour, should be conquered in a single combat. In this way, O king, you will be victorious. O very intelligent lord, later you should do what you like.

Śeṣa said :

55-57. Hearing these words Śatrughna, the killer of the heroes of his enemy, having determined to fight, ordered his good warriors: "All the kings with their armies proficient in (the use of) weapons, should quickly exert themselves in such a way that I get victory." Hearing it, those (kings) proficient in fighting, full of great energy, went with their soldiers to fight (against the enemy in order to obtain) victory for the descendant of Raghu.

CHAPTER FORTYONE

Rukmāṅgada Is Defeated by Puṣkala

Śeṣa said :

1-7. Those very powerful heroes of Śatrughna, endowed with valour and quite ready to fight, went into the army of Vīramaṇi. The men discharging arrows, piercing many soldiers, holding bows were seen standing in the battlefield. Many elephants were killed there. On the battlefield were seen jewelled chariots shattered with their horses. Having heard about their destruction the mighty Rukmāṅgada, standing in a jewelled chariot, came there to fight with the soldiers. He fixed arrows on his bow and had two inexhaustible quivers. That mighty Rukmāṅgada, full of great anger and with blood in his eyes, making thousands of brave men terrified with his arrows causing wailing (in the enemy's camp), went (to fight). The mighty prince challenged Śatrughna and Bharata's son Puṣkala like himself in fame and glory.

Rukmāṅgada said:

8-15a. You who perform brave deeds and whose power and valour are great; come to fight with me, the strong and lustrous prince. O brave one, what is the use of frightening and killing others, crores of men? Having fought a great battle with me, obtain victory.

The mighty Puṣkala laughed and quickly struck him who was speaking like this on his large chest with sharp hooks. Not bearing it, the prince fixing arrows on his great bow struck with ten arrows Puṣkala in his chest. Both excited while fighting, both desiring victory, shone in the battle like Kārtikeya and (the demon) Tāraka. Fixing very sharp arrows ten in number on his bow Puṣkala, the hero, made the prince chariotless. With four (arrows) he knocked down his four horses; with two (he knocked down) his charioter; with one (he knocked down) his flag and with two (he knocked down) the guards of his chariot. The swift one pierced the prince with one (arrow).

15b-17. Seeing that wonderful act all heroes were very much delighted. He whose bow was broken, who had lost his chariot, whose horses and charioteer were killed, became extremely angry and got into another chariot. Standing in the excellent chariot adorned with gems of horses, he took a big strong bow furnished with a string.

18-19. Rukmāṅgada said these words to the brave Puṣkala: "O you tormentor of the enemies, having done (a) great (act of) valour where are you going? Today see my valour brought about by might. O hero, stand carefully; I shall take your chariot to the sky."

20-22a. Saying so he fixed a very fierce arrow on his own bow. Then enchanting the 'bhrāmaka' missile (i.e. the whirling missile), he discharged that sharp arrow adorned with gold at the feathered part into Puṣkala's chariot. By that arrow his chariot was taken to a distance of a yojana. With difficulty it was held in check by the charioteer; the chariot roamed on the earth.

22b-24. Puṣkala, who knew the (use of) great missiles, getting back his position with difficulty, and fixing an arrow on his bow said (these words) to him: "O best among the heroes, reach heaven resorted to by all gods. O best king, people like you are

not fit for (living on) the earth. They are fit for the assembly of Indra. Therefore, go to the abode of gods."

25-28. Speaking thus he discharged a great missile reaching the sky. (Struck) by that arrow the chariot straightway went into the sky. Going beyond all worlds it went to the sun's orb. By its flame the chariot, along with the horses and the charioteer, was burnt. With his chariot greatly burnt by its rays, he being extremely pained, fell, keeping in heart Śiva, the destroyer of the impious ones. With his body burnt by the rays, he fell there on the ground. He became extremely unhappy; and swooned on the battlefield.

29-33. When the prince dropped unconscious on the ground, there was a great wailing on the battlefield. The enemies led by Puṣkala got victory; (while) the enemies who had preserved the horse, were intent on fleeing. Then king Vīramaṇi, seeing the swoon of his son (i.e. seeing that his son was unconscious), was full of anger, and marched against Puṣkala who stood in the battlefield. At that time the earth, along with the mountains and excellent forests, trembled; the brave ones were delighted, (while) the cowards were oppressed with fear. Holding a great bow and two inexhaustible quivers and breathing heavily due to anger, he challenged his enemy.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

Vīramaṇi Is Defeated

Śeṣa said:

1-4. Seeing him challenging king Puṣkala in the ocean of the great army, even Hanūmat, the lord of monkeys, having with a sound raised the tail of his big body and having made a sound like that of a cloud, ran to him. When the best heroes stood in the battlefield, the lord of monkeys went to the best king. Seeing Hanūmat coming the mighty hero Puṣkala looked at him with his eyes full of much blood (i.e. very red) due to anger towards his enemy with a deep-sounding voice like (the

sound of) a cloud and filling the battlefield with his sound Puṣkala who knew (the use of) great missiles, spoke to that Hanūmat:

Puṣkala said:

5-10. O great monkey, how (i.e. why) have you come to fight in this battle? How much is the 'great' power of the king Vīramaṇi? It is very little. When the three worlds coming together stand before you, (even) then you may or may not desire to go to fight. Who is this king Vīramaṇi (before you)? How much is his power? It is battle. O hero, your fierce arrival (i.e. the arrival of you, the fierce one) here is not considered (necessary). By virtue of the side glance in the form of the grace of Raghunātha I shall come out after overcoming him who is difficult to be subdued. O lord of monkeys, do not have a mind to fight. With the heap of Rāma's grace you crossed the ocean in the form of demons. Similarly by remembering Rāma well I shall overcome this one difficult to be subdued. There is no doubt that the ocean of the miseries of them who after having encountered a difficulty remember Rāma, gets dried.

11. Therefore, O mighty hero, O powerful one, go near Śatrughna. I shall just come, after having vanquished king Vīramaṇi in a moment.

Śeṣa said:

12. Having heard these courageous words uttered by Puṣkala (Hanūmat), the killer of the heroes of the enemy, again spoke (these) words to Puṣkala.

Hanūmat said:

13-16. O son, do not act rashly towards king Vīramaṇi. He is a donor, a protector and is endowed with might and valour. You are young, (while) the king is old and the best among those who know (the use of) all weapons and missiles. In a battle he has conquered many heroes adorned with (i.e. characterized by) bravery. Know that by his side is protector Śiva, won over by means of devotion and living in his city with Umā (i.e. Pārvatī). Therefore, O Puṣkala, I will fight with this king only. Having vanquished other heroes, obtain great fame.

Puṣkala said:

17-23. Having won over Śiva through devotion he has installed him (i.e. his image) in his city; but the great lord does not directly live in his heart. That Rāma, having propitiated whom Sadāśiva reached the highest position, does not go to any other place after leaving my heart. The entire immobile and mobile world remains where Rāma remains. Therefore, I shall conquer king Vīramaṇi in the battle. O monkey, go to fight with other kings who are very haughty, in the battle. Do not be worried (about me), O lord.

Having heard these courageous words, Hanūmat went to fight with Vīrasiṁha, the younger brother of king (Vīramaṇi), in the battle. Lakṣmīnidhi, fought in a single combat in chariots with his son named Śubhāṅgada who knew the use of great weapons and missiles. Prince Sumada, distinguished by his own valour and might, (equipped) with weapons went to fight with Balamitra.

24-25. Seeing the king and challenging him, Puṣkala, skilled in a single combat in chariots, seated in a chariot decked with gold went to him. The king who spoke well, seeing Puṣkala, skilled in fight, to have come (there), said (to him) with fearless words on the battlefield.

Vīramaṇi said:

26-30a. O child, do not march against me who am angry and fierce and irascible in a battle; go (back) with a desire for (i.e. in order to save) your life. Do not fight with me. Kings like me favour children like you. They do not strike them. Therefore, go out of the battlefield. I was eager (to fight with you) till I had not seen you with my eyes. Now my mind does not desire to strike you. All that great act of you, having (but) a child's intelligence, viz. that you pierced my son with arrows and caused him to swoon, is forgiven by me.

Hearing these words, Puṣkala said to him:

Puṣkala said:

30b-33. (You say) I am a child, and you are very old, proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles. But the view of kṣatriyas is: Those alone who have a superior power are old and

not those who are old in age. I made unconscious your son who was proud of his valour and might. Now I shall knock you down with (my) weapons in the battle. Therefore, O king, stand with care in the battle. Nobody (even if) he remains at Indra's position, can conquer me, a devotee of Rāma.

34-45a. Hearing these words of Puṣkala, the best king, seeing (i.e. knowing him to be) young, laughed, but again became angry. The furious son of Bharata, having seen him to be angry, struck the king in his chest with twenty sharp arrows. The king, seeing those arrows, discharged by him (i.e. Puṣkala) coming to him got very angry and cut them off in many ways with sharp arrows. Seeing the arrows being cut off he, the prince named Puṣkala and the son of Bharata, was very angry at heart, and struck the king on his forehead with three arrows. Stuck there, they shone as if they were the three peaks of the Trikūṭa (mountain). The king afflicted by the arrows and full of great anger, struck the hero Puṣkala, in his heart with nine arrows. By these arrows profuse blood was quaffed from the body of the son of the younger brother of Rāma, as (it were) angry poisonous snakes had clung on his body. Puṣkala who was extremely angry, again quickly pierced the king with a hundred arrows of sharp joints. By the arrows his armour was cut off. His crown along with the helmet (was broken). His chariot (was) broken. His great bow which was made ready, was also cut off due to the flood of (i.e. profuse) anger. Wet with the blood and with his body pierced with arrows the king getting into another chariot marched against the son of Bharata. (He said to Puṣkala:) "O hero, O bee (howering round) the lotus-like feet of Rāma, you are blessed. Today you have done a great feat that I was deprived of my chariot. Now, O hero, protect your life when I am fighting (with you). For you, (to save) your life is not easy when I stand (before you) in the form of death."

45b-56a. Speaking like this, he, proficient in (the use of) many weapons, struck (him) with innumerable arrows. On the earth and in (every) direction (only) his arrows (were seen) there. On all sides he pierced and cut into two the chariots along with the warriors (in them). On the battlefield flowed a river having the stream of blood, where the intoxicated elephants

looked like peaks of mountains, the hair on the heads of beings again and again appeared like moss. Many arms of the heroes, which were beautified with rings and which were smeared with sandal, appeared after they were cut off like serpents. The heads of the best heroes had the resemblance of turtles. There the flesh of the great heroes was (i.e. looked like) mud. When such an incident took place, hundreds of witches drank, with vessels, the blood of the creatures falling in the battle on the battlefields. With joy and eagerness they enjoyed the flesh. Having drunk the blood and having eaten the flesh, the furious (witches) danced, laughed and sang loudly on the battlefield. The goblins there on the battlefield with their bodies intoxicated, holding with their hands the heads of creatures, were engaged in sounding them like musical instruments made of bell-metal. The furious jackals, causing fear to cowards, having eaten much flesh of those that fell on the battlefield roared. The cowards who were frightened got into the hollows of aśvattha trees. They were eaten up by the witches. Sinners survive nowhere.

56b-64. Seeing this destruction of his army, Puṣkala, the best among the heroes, also, brought about destruction on the battlefield. The heads of elephants were cut asunder, pearls fell (from their heads). That river (of blood) full of hair, appeared like the Tāmraparṇī (river). The arrows discharged by Puṣkala and stuck into the bodies of men destroyed the life of the heroes on all sides. On the battlefield, all the excellent warriors with their bodies wetted with blood, with their bodies pierced appeared like the kiṁśuka (trees). At that time Puṣkala who was angry and full of wrath, having spoken (a few words) to the king, struck him with many arrows. The king with his body pierced by his arrows and with his armour shattered, regarding him as very powerful, struck him with crores of arrows. Due to those arrows profuse blood discharged from the armour flowed (down). His body in the grip of the cage of arrows, became brilliant. That son of Bharata, remaining in the cage of arrows and with his mind afflicted, was not able either to take or to fix his arrows. Remembering Rāma, and holding tightly the great bow in his hand, he discharged sharp arrows keeping off the hosts of his enemies.

65. O best of sages, having shaken off the net of those arrows with those arrows, and having blown his conch, he with his fear gone said to the king in the battle.

Puṣkala said:

66-70. O hero, you have done a great feat by putting me, a great warrior and tormentor of heroes, into the cage of arrows. Due to your old age you are venerable to me; (but) O king Vīramaṇi, today, now, see my great act of valour on the battle-field. O hero, if with three arrows I shall not make you uncons-cious, then listen to my pledge deluding all the heroes: O hero, if I do not cause you to fall into a swoon in the battle, let me have the sin of him who, a great sinner and of very foolish deeds, even after reaching Gaṅgā that removes sins, cen-sures her and does not plunge into her (water). Be ready, O king.

71-78. Hearing these words of Puṣkala, the best king (Vīramaṇi) was angry, and being very much afflicted fixed sharp arrows (on his bow). Those arrows went (off) after piercing the great chest of the son of Bharata and fell down on the earth like those who are averse to the devotion to Rāma. Then he aiming at his large expansive chest, discharged a sharp arrow, bright like fire. The lord of the earth cut it into two with his arrow; and burning like the orb of the sun it fell into the chariot. He fixed another auspicious arrow through (i.e. remem-bering) his devotion to his mother. He too cut it off with a big arrow. Then dejected in heart and remembering Rāma, the destroyer of his affliction, as to what to do (then), the knower of (i.e. he who was proficient in the use of) great missiles discharg-ed (an arrow). The arrow resembling a serpent and burning with the sun's radiance, stuck into his chest, and made him unconscious. Then all wailed and were intent on fleeing. When the king became unconscious, Puṣkala obtained victory.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

Defeat of Puṣkala and Śatrughna

Śeṣa said:

1-7. Hanūmat having come to Vīrasiṁha, said these words: "O brave one, stop; where are you going? In a moment I shall conquer you." Hearing these powerful words of the monkey, he burning with a flood of (i.e. great) anger sounded his bow having the sound of clouds and discharging sharp arrows shone on the battlefield. Hanūmat, Añjanī's son, seeing those sharp arrows firmly stuck to his body, (and therefore looking) charming as in a heavy downpour of rain from a cloud in Āṣāḍha, became extremely angry in his heart. With his fist having adamantine strength he struck (Vīrasiṁha) on his chest. The hero struck with the fist fell on the ground. Seeing his uncle fainting, Śubhāṅgada (came to the battlefield). Rukmāṅgada also abandoning his swoon, went to the battlefield. Both of them showering arrows, loudly thundering like two clouds and causing great destruction, marched against the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat).

8-11. Seeing that the two heroes had come the lord of monkeys having encircled with his tail the two holding bows along with their chariots, broke them (by throwing them) on the ground (and) they became unconscious just at that moment only. With their bodies tinged with blood the two became motionless. Balamitra fought with Sumada for a long time and made him unconscious with (i.e. by striking him with) arrows having very sharp joints. In a moment Puṣkala led him to a swoon (i.e. made him unconscious) which was (characterized by) loss of sensation. Śatrughna's army destroying the (enemy's) warriors got victory.

12-20. At that time Śiva seated in an excellent chariot and stretching his divine bow ran (i e. rushed) to these warriors. The great one carrying the crescent moon in his twisted hair and having as ornaments serpents touching at will, took up his bow. The great god, the remover of the afflictions of his devotees, seeing his own men unconscious, went along with mighty troops to fight with these warriors of Śatrughna. With his attendants and followers he causing the earth to tremble came there to protect his devotees as he formerly came to Tripura. The trident-

holder saluted by gods, the author of deluge, having eyes very red due to anger, saw very intelligent soldiers (there). Seeing the great god who had come there, the powerful younger brother of Rāma went to the battlefield to fight with the crest-jewel of all gods. Seeing Śatrughna having come (there), the holder of the trident, held a bow with the string (stretched), and being very angry said: "Puṣkala, the servant of Rāma's feet, who went to the battle after having killed my devotee, has done a great feat. Today where is that Puṣkala knowing (i.e. proficient in the use of) great missiles? Killing him who troubled my devotee in the battle, I shall get happiness."

Śeṣa said:

21-28a. Saying so he sent Vīrabhadra to Puṣkala. "Go to fight with Puṣkala who is troubling my servant in the battle." He sent Nandin to (fight with) the very mighty Hanūmat. He sent Bhṛṅgin of mighty arms to (fight with) Kuśadhvaja. He ordered his own attendant by name Caṇḍa to (fight with) Sumada. The large-minded Puṣkala seeing that the great attendant of Mahārudra (i.e. Śiva) had come went to fight (with him). In the battle Puṣkala struck him with five arrows. With his body wounded by those arrows he directed the trident (towards him). The very strong one, having cut off the trident in a moment, roared. O brāhmaṇa, seeing his trident cut off the mighty follower of Rudra quickly hit Bharata's son on his head with (the missile called) Khatvāṅga. That great warrior, hit with the Khatvāṅga, became unconscious for a moment. That good warrior Puṣkala knowing (i.e. proficient in the use of) great missiles, giving up his swoon (i.e. regaining consciousness) that moment only cut off with his arrows the Khatvāṅga in his hand.

28b-42a. Vīrabhadra, with the Khatvāṅga in his hand cut off became extremely angry and shattered the warrior's chariot. Having broken the chariot of the warrior and having (thus) made him a foot-soldier, he fought with the magnanimous Puṣkala in a close fight. That very mighty Puṣkala abandoning the chariot shattered to pieces by him (i.e. Vīrabhadra), hit Vīrabhadra with his fist. They hit each other with fists, thighs and knees. They were eager to kill each other. They desired to conquer each other. Thus (the fight) between the two powerful

ones lasted for days, going on day and night. None lost in it and none of the very powerful ones won it. When the fifth day came, the very mighty Vīrabhadra seized the great hero Puṣkala and jumped into the sky. There a great fight, attracting (even) the gods, took place between the two, with fists, strokes of feet, arms and excellent hoofs (i.e. feet). Then Puṣkala who was extremely angry seizing Vīrabhadra by the neck struck (i.e. threw) him on the ground. The very mighty Vīrabhadra distressed by that stroke seized Puṣkala by the foot and repeatedly shaking him and throwing him on the ground the very mighty one cut off his head with blazing ear-rings with his trident. The very strong Vīrabhadra having killed Puṣkala roared. That roaring follower of Śiva frightened great warriors. When Puṣkala fell in the battle, there was a very great wailing. All the very proficient men became frightened on the battlefield. They informed Śatrughna that Puṣkala killed by Vīrabhadra, the attendant of Śiva, had fallen on the battlefield. The great hero, the mighty (Śatrughna) having thus heard about Puṣkala's being killed in the battle, was very much grieved and due to great grief trembled.

42b-47a. Knowing that Śatrughna was distressed Rudra spoke to him who was grieving for the hero (viz. Puṣkala) when Puṣkala was killed in the battle: "O very powerful Śatrughna, do not be distressed on the battlefield. The fall of heroes in a battle is said (to lead) to fame. The hero named Puṣkala who fought for five days with Vīrabhadra who causes great destruction and who in a moment killed Dakṣa that insulted me, and who in a moment killed the demons, the soldiers of Tripura, is blessed. Therefore, O lord of kings, O very powerful one, giving up your distress fight; When I—the warrior—am standing (before you), stand (i.e. wait) carefully, O best among the heroes.

47b-54. The brave Śatrughna, having abandoned his grief got angry with Śaṅkara, and making his bow ready he covered the great god with arrows. Those arrows, it was a great wonder, did not produce any wound on the body of the lord of gods who had come there for the protection of his devotees. Those arrows (of Śatrughna) and also the arrows of Śaṅkara remained in the sky, pervading this entire universe of the sage (i.e. Brahmā) working wonders. Everywhere (people) on seeing that war of arrows thought it to be the deluge, destroying the world and

deluding everyone. Those (gods) who had remained in their own cities having come to see it by resorting to (their) divine cars, praised very much that (fight) of the two: "This one is the author of the destruction and the creation of the three worlds. This one is also the younger brother of the great king Rāmacandra. What will be this (i.e. what will it lead to)? Who, on the earth, will be victorious? Which hero will meet with a defeat on the battlefield?" The fight between the two thus continued for eleven days.

55-62. When the twelfth day came, the king (i.e. Śatrughna) full of anger discharged the missile called 'Brahmā' to kill Mahādeva. Knowing that (his) enemy Śatrughna had discharged the great missile he laughed and absorbed it and discharged the great (missile called) Brahmaśiras. Being very much astonished (he thought) what should be done hereafter? Into the chest of him (i.e. of Śatrughna) who was thinking like this, the crest-jewel of gods (i.e. Śiva) quickly struck an arrow resembling fire. (Being struck) by that arrow Śatrughna became unconscious on the battlefield. The entire army served by the warriors, wailed. All heroes, led by Subāhu, Sumada, and proud of the strength of their arms, were knocked down on the earth by the attendants of Śiva. Seeing Śatrughna pained by the arrow and fallen unconscious and Puṣkala being put in a chariot by the servants to protect him, the angry Hanūmat, wagging his dreadful tail, remembering Rāma, and delighting his own (colleagues) came to fight with Śiva, the author of destruction.

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

Hanūmat on the Droṇa Mountain

Śeṣa said :

1. The hero Hanūmat, desirous of killing the lord of gods, came near Rudra on the battlefield and said (to him):

Hanūmat said:

2-5. O Rudra, what you are doing is against religious merit.

Therefore, I desire to punish you eager to kill Rāma's devotee. Formerly I heard it said variously by gods and sages that Rudra, the trident-holder, always remembers Rāma's feet. All that has become (i.e. proved) false in your case, who are fighting with Śatrughna. My brave (hero) Puṣkala is killed and Śatrughna also has become unconscious. Therefore, I shall today knock you, ready to destroy the three worlds, down. O Śarva (i.e. Śiva), you who are averse to Rāma's devotion, stand carefully.

Śeṣa said :

6-9. That great lord said to the monkey speaking like this: "O best hero, you are fortunate. What you say is not false. This Rāmacandra saluted by gods and demons is my lord. Śatrughna, the killer of his enemy's heroes, brought his horse. Inspired by devotion to him (i.e. Rāma) he came to protect him. The duty (of the lord) is that his devotee, his own soul, must be protected on any account. Let the great Raghunātha look upon me who am shameless by showing pity for me who was a little angry due to the great grief of my devotee."

Śeṣa said :

10-16. When the lord of Caṇḍī was speaking like this, Hanūmat, extremely angry, took a big stone and hit it at his chariot. His chariot, hit with the stone was broken to pieces along with the charioteer, horses, flag and banners. All the deities in the sky praised the lord of monkeys; "O lord of monkeys, you are blessed; you have done a great feet." Seeing Śrī Śiva without a chariot Nandin ran to him. He said to the great god: "Sit on my back." Hanūmat was extremely angry with Śiva who was seated on (the back of) the bull (i.e. Nandin). Drawing out a big stone he then quickly hit it on his chest. Hit with it the lord of the beings (i.e. Śiva) took a sharp, bright, spear, having three points and resembling the flames of fire. Seeing that great trident, bright like fire, that came to him, he (i.e. Hanūmat) took it in his hand and in a moment quickly broke it into (pieces as small as) the sesamum seeds.

17-21. When the lord of the monkeys quickly in a moment broke the trident, Śiva took in his hand the (missile called) Śakti entirely made of iron. That Śakti discharged by Śiva stuck to

(i.e. hit) the chest of the intelligent (Hanūmat) (and) in a moment the lord of the monkeys became afflicted. In a moment having overcome that pain he seized a strong tree and hit it on (Śiva's) chest adorned with great serpents. The lordly serpents struck by the hero were frightened. Leaving him and going here and there they speedily went to the nether world. Śiva seeing the tree discharged (by Hanūmat) and (hitting) his chest got angry and took a terrible pestle in both his hands.

22-29a. (He said): "O mean monkey, you are (now) killed. Flee and go (away) from the battle. In a moment I shall destroy your life with (this) pestle." Seeing the pestle discharged by the angry Śiva the monkey remembering Viṣṇu (i.e. Rāma) avoided it very speedily. That pestle made of strong iron and discharged by Śiva, fell down. Having torn off the entire earth it went to the nether world. Hanūmat, the servant of Rāma, was extremely angry at that time. Taking a mountain in his hand he hit it on the chest (of Śiva). While the lord of Satī (i.e. Śiva) was thinking of cutting off the mountain he was struck by the lord of monkeys with a tree having many branches. When he (i.e. Śiva) was intent on cutting it off, he was hit with rocks (by Hanūmat). The persevering Śiva made up his mind to break those rocks. Just then he showered him (i.e. Śiva) with trees and mountains. Having encircled the protector of the beings (i.e. Śiva) with his tail he struck him again and again with stones, mountains, trees and strokes of his tail. Nandin was very much frightened, and even the moon was reduced to pieces. The very angry great god got very much confused.

29b-32. He said to the lord of monkeys who every moment made him very much disquieted: "O follower of the protector of Raghus, you are blessed. You have today done a great feat, so that I am very much pleased with you. O you, having a great speed, I am not easily obtainable by means of charity or sacrifice or a little penance. Therefore, ask for a boon from me."

Śeṣa said:

33. Hanūmat laughing (i.e. smiling) and speaking in fearless words, spoke to that very much delighted great god (i.e. Śiva) who was speaking like this:

Hanūmat said:

34-40. O great god, by Ragunātha's grace I have everything. Yet I ask for a boon from you who are pleased with the battle. This our (hero) named Puṣkala has fallen down dead. So also Śatrughna, Rāma's younger brother, became unconscious in the battle. Many other heroes wounded with arrows have also fallen. Some are unconscious, some have sunk; (please) protect them along with your own attendants. Do that by which big ghosts, vampires and fiends, so also foxes and others, will not take them away and eat them up; and (do that by which) their bodies will not be split. By all means preserve all of them, till, having conquered the attendants of Indra, I bring (either) the Droṇa mountain or the herbs thereon, and bring back, per force, to life these heroes kept under (your) control. Here I go to take that Droṇa mountain on which life-restoring herbs exist.

41-47. Hearing these words (Śiva) said to him: "All right. Quickly go to that mountain. I shall preserve your dead warriors." Having heard those words of the lord, he went to the mountain Droṇa. Having crossed all islands he went to the milky ocean. Here (i.e. on the battlefiled), great Śiva, with his very strong and brave attendants took care of the corpses. Hanūmat having reached (the mountain) Droṇa and having put that great mountain called Droṇa on his tail quickly started for the battlefield. O brāhmaṇa, when he was engaged in carrying it, the mountain shook. Seeing it shaking the hosts of deities protecting it wailed and said: "What is this happening on the mountain? Who is this hero of great power and valour that is taking away this (mountain)?" Doing (i.e. saying) so all the gods together saw the monkey. Saying to him, "Leave it" they struck him with crores of weapons and missiles.

48-55. Seeing them all striking (him) Hanūmat was very much angry. In a moment the hero struck them all as Indra had struck the demons. Some of them were struck (by him) with his feet; some were crushed with his hands. Some were struck with his tail and some were hit with the peak (of the mountain). All of them struck by the monkey, perished in a moment. Some wet with blood, fell on the ground. Some trembled due to the fear of the monkey (and) went to Indra, the lord of gods. Seeing them

disturbed with fear and wet with blood, Indra, the best of all gods, being dejected said to the gods: "How (is it that) you are shaking with fear? How (is it that) you are wet with blood? By which demon or by which mean goblin have you been struck? Tell me the whole truth, so that knowing it I shall go to (i.e. march against) him; and having struck and bound him, the mad one who struck you, I shall come (back)." Hearing these words the best gods spoke in piteous words to Indra saluted by gods and demons.

Gods said:

56-61. We do not know (we are not sure, but) someone, taking the form of a monkey, came here and was intent upon taking that mountain after encircling it with his tail. When he decided (i.e. was about) to go back, all of us gathered together and being well-equipped and showering him with all weapons and missiles, fought with him. He, the powerful one, vanquished all of us in a battle. Many excellent gods, struck (by him) there fell on the ground. We with our bodies quite wet with blood and afflicted with the wounds and (i.e. but) alive due to our religious merit, have come here.

Hearing these words of the gods Indra ordered all gods endowed with great power: "Go to the great mountain Droṇa to bind the very mighty monkey. Binding him who has committed a great sin against the gods, bring him (here)."

62-67. Thus ordered, they went to the best mountain Droṇa, where the mighty hero, Hanūmat, the best monkey, stood. Having gone there all of them spoke to Hanūmat. They were struck by Hanūmat with fists and slaps. In a moment, they with their bodies having bloody wounds fell there. Others intent on fleeing went to the lord of heaven . Hearing it (i.e. the account) angry Indra, the best of gods, directed all the best gods towards the great hero, the lord of monkeys. Ordered by him they went where the mighty lord of monkeys (stood). Having seen all of them come there the best of the monkeys said: "O heroes, do not go to (i.e. march against) me in the battle. I shall now forcibly take you near the city of Yama."

68-72. Though told like this, all of them endowed with great

power, got ready and struck the monkey with weapons and missiles discharged in various ways. Cruel due to anger some of the best gods struck the mighty one with various (weapons and missiles like) lances, hatchets, swords, spears with sharp edges, pestles and śaktis. He quickly struck all the best gods with rocks. Some fled to Indra and told (the account) to him. Hearing the words told by them the lord of the gods was frightened. Having gone near (i.e. to) Bṛhaspati, the head and the counsellor of the residents of heaven, the excellent preceptor of gods, and having saluted him, he asked him:

Indra said :

73. O lord, who is the monkey that has come to carry Droṇa (mountain)? Who (i.e. he) has killed my heroes, the gods, holding weapons.

Śeṣa said :

74. Having heard these words uttered by him, the great Āṅgirasa (i.e. Bṛhaspati) spoke to Indra, the lord of gods, who was dejected with fear.

Bṛhaspati said :

75-80. He is the servant of him (i.e. of Rāma) who killed Rāvaṇa in the battle and burnt (i.e. destroyed) Kumbhakarṇa and who killed all the enemies. Know him to be Hanūmat who with the fire (set) to his tail burnt Laṅkā along with the Trikūṭa mountain and who killed Akṣa. He killed all (the gods). He is intent upon (taking) the Droṇa (mountain). The great king (Rāma), the best one among the mighty, is performing the horse-sacrifice. The great king Vīramaṇi, Śiva's devotee, took away his horse. Then a battle fascinating the gods, took place. In the battle Śiva killed many heroes of Rāma. To revive them this very mighty one will certainly take the Droṇa (mountain). (Even) after fighting with him for hundreds of years he, the powerful one, will not be vanquished by you. Therefore, propitiate the monkey. Give him the herb thereon.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

Śrī Rāma Appears on the Battlefield

Śeṣa said:

1-2. Having heard the words of Bṛhaspati, the Supreme Being, the enemy of Vṛṣaparvan, having come to know that Wind's son (Hanūmat) had come there on Rāma's mission gave up the fear in his mind that was due to the monkey and was delighted and said to Bṛhaspati.

Indra said:

3-8. How shall we manage, O master of gods, if this Droṇa (mountain) is taken (by Hanūmat)? Tell me further, how can the gods survive? Now properly propitiate the son of Wind. Rāma will be very much delighted, and the gods would have happiness.

Hearing the words of the lord of gods, Bṛhaspati, putting Indra in the front and surrounded by all gods went there where the fearless monkey, Hanūmat, stood. Having forcibly conquered the happy gods he was roaring. They, led by Bṛhaspati, went near him and having saluted the feet of the son of Wind fell (at his feet). Bṛhaspati, the best among the eloquent being urged on by the lord of gods, the master of the world, spoke to the hero.

Bṛhaspati said:

9-11. Not knowing your valour the gods have done (this) act. O you highly intelligent one, you are the servant of Rāma's feet. What for is this undertaking, and how have you come here? We who are bent before you, will carry out what you say. O you son of Wind, having a body causing fear to the demons, give up anger and regard the lord of gods with favour.

Śeṣa said:

12-15. Hearing these words of the preceptor of gods he of a great fame, spoke to all gods and to Bṛhaspati: "In the battle with king Vīramaṇi, Śiva killed many warriors. To bring them back to life I shall carry the Droṇa mountain. Those who, proud

of their power and valour, will stop it (i.e. the mountain from being carried by me) will be sent to Yama's abode by me. Therefore, give me either (the mountain) Droṇa or the herb on it, by which I shall revive the heroes who died on the battlefield.

Śeṣa said:

16-21. Hearing these words of the magnanimous son of Wind they all bowed before him and gave him the reviving herb. The gods had given up their fear and were delighted and the residents of heaven being happy went (back) keeping the lord of gods in front (i.e. led by the lord of gods). Hanūmat took the medicine and came to the battlefield. He was praised by all the hosts of gods eagerly watching that feat. Even all the enemies having seen the monkey who had come (back), praised him (with the words), "Well (done), well (done)", and looked upon the monkey as wonderful. The monkey (i.e. Hanūmat), full of great joy, came there and went near the dead warrior Puṣkala, the heart of Rāma, protected by Śiva on the fierce battlefield. Having called Sumati, the minister honoured by the great, he said (to him): "I shall bring back to life all the heroes, that died in the battle."

22-27. Saying so, (he put) the medicine on the great chest of Puṣkala, and joining his head with his body, spoke (these) auspicious words: "If I recognise (only) lord Rāghava (i.e. Rāma) by the deeds of my mind, body and speech, then let him quickly revive by means of the medicine." When he was saying these words, Puṣkala got up on the battlefield and he, the crest-jewel of the brave, gnawed his teeth in anger: "Where has that Vīrabhadra, making me unconscious on the battlefield, gone? I shall instantly knock him down. Where is my excellent bow?" To him who was speaking like this the lord of the monkeys said: "O hero, you who are talking about him on the battlefield, are blessed. You who were killed by Vīrabhadra, have been again brought back to life by the grace of Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma). Come on, let us go to Śatrughna who is unconscious."

28-35. Saying so he went to the front of the excellent battle. (There) Śatrughna afflicted by Śiva's arrow, was breathing (i.e. was alive). Having gone there near the magnanimous

Śatrughna Hanūmat put medicine on his chest that had come to (i.e. started) breathing, and said to him: "O best Śatrughna, revive. O you of great might and valour, why (i.e. due to what) did you become unconscious on the battlefield? If I being diligent (i.e. diligently) keep celibacy till (the end of) my life, then let this hero Śatrughna revive in a moment." No sooner did he utter these words than Śatrughna came back to consciousness in a moment. (He said:) "Where is Śiva? Leaving the battlefield where has Śiva gone?" Śrī Rudra, the trident-holder had killed many heroes in the battle. The magnanimous lord of the monkeys revived them all. Then all of them were well-equipped; their minds were full of anger. Seated in their own chariots they with their bodies wounded marched against their enemies. Puṣkala marched against Vīrabhadra; Kuśadhvaja against Caṇḍa; the hero Hanūmat against Nandin; and Śatrughna against Śiva in the battle.

36-52a. The king marched against Śatrughna who was the best among the mighty, who had stretched his bow, and who had stood after calling (i.e. challenging) Śiva in the battle. The heroic king Vīramaṇi and the mighty Śatrughna fought in the battle with each other a fight causing wonder to the sages. O brāhmaṇa, king Vīramaṇi in a moment shattered to (pieces like) sesamum seeds more than a hundred chariots of Śatrughna, the lord of kings. Then Śatrughna who was very angry on the battlefield, discharged the Āgneya missile (i.e. the missile presided over by Agni) to burn him along with his army. The king seeing that great burning missile discharged by Śatrughna got very angry and took up the Vāruṇa missile (i.e. the missile presided over by Varuṇa). Seeing that (fire) cooled by the Vāruṇa missile the strong younger brother of Rāma discharged at him the Vāyavyāstra (i.e. the missile presided over by Vāyu). Due to it great (i.e. strong) wind was produced. The clouds struck by the wind moved in all directions. They roamed here and there and the army (of Śatrughna) became happy. Seeing his army afflicted by the wind the great king Vīramaṇi took (i.e. fixed) the mountain-like missile eradicating the enemy on his bow. The wind was checked by the mountains and did not blow on the battlefield. Seeing it the younger brother of Rāma (i.e. Śatrughna) took up the missile like the thunderbolt.

All the mountains struck by the Vajrāstra were reduced to pieces like sesamum seeds and were powdered in the battle honoured by the heroes. The heroes with their bodies shattered by the Vajrāstra (i.e. the thunderbolt-like missile) were adorned with blood on the battlefield. The battle was interesting. Then the great king Vīramaṇi who was very angry fixed on his bow the wonderful Brahmāstra (i.e. the missile presided over by Brahmā) burning the enemies. Śatrughna took an arrow and remembered the very charming missile given by that female devotee and deluding all enemies. The Brahmāstra, which left his hand came to the enemy. Just then he, named Śatrughna, discharged the deluding missile. In a moment the Brahmāstra was cut into two by the Mohanāstra (i.e. the deluding weapon) and quickly stuck into the king's chest and made him unconscious. Hundreds of arrows were discharged by king Śatrughna. And all the brave attendants of Śiva that had become unconscious lay so on the ground near the feet of Śiva.

52b-60. The very angry Śiva seated in his chariot went to the king. Śatrughna at once went to fight with Śiva on the battlefield. Making his bow ready and drawn out he fought. Between the two a fight breaking the enemy, took place. It brightened up the atmosphere by means of the weapons and missiles discharged in various ways. Such a battle due to (i.e. involving) killings by missiles and counter-missiles and strikings and counter-strikings did not take place even between gods and demons. At that time Śatrughna was very much afflicted in the battle with Śiva. On the advice of the son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat) he remembered his lord (i.e. Rāma): "O lord, O brother, the very fierce Śiva is snatching away my life. Raising your bow protect me on the battlefield. O Rāma, many crossed the ocean of grief by (uttering) your name. O Rāma, O Rāma, the cloud of kindness, lift me who am in misery." When he was speaking like this, Rāma who was dark like the blue lotus, whose eyes were like lotuses, having (tucked) a deer's horn to his waist, and who had the body of (i.e. like that of) an initiated person, was seen on the battlefield. Seeing him on the battlefield, Śatrughna was amazed.

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

Vīramaṇi Surrenders the Horse to Śrī Rāma

Śeṣa said:

1-4. Seeing his brother Śrī Rāma destroying the affliction of him who had saluted him to have come (there) Śatrughna became free from all unhappiness, O best brāhmaṇa. The confused Hanūmat seeing with joy Rāma's feet saluted him who had come (there) for the protection of his devotees and said: "O lord, it is (but) proper for you to protect your devotees, since you freed everyone vanquished and tied with a noose in the battle. O you descendant of Raghu, we are now blessed that we shall see your feet. In a moment only we shall conquer the enemies by your grace."

Śeṣa said:

5-17. O brāhmaṇa, seeing Rāma who was within the scope of (i.e. known by) meditation of the meditating saints, who gave fearlessness to those who saluted him, who had come there, Śiva fell at his feet, and said: "You are the only Puruṣa (i.e. the Supreme Being) actually rising above Prakṛti (i.e. Nature). With a portion of you, you create and destroy the universe. You who are formless, are the highest cause of the entire world. Endowed with Māyā you who are only one, take up three forms: At the time of creation (you exist) in the form of Brahmā, In protecting (the world) you are full of your lustre; and at the time of the final destruction of the world (you are) I known as Śarva (i.e. Śiva). O highest lord, your act of performing the horse-sacrifice for removing (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa, is (but) a wonderful mockery. Wherefrom can sin (come to) you, the spotless waterfrom whose feet called Gaṅgā I carry inside (i.e. on) my head to pacify my sins? Certainly I did the act to hurt you much. O you kind one, forgive (me) about it which obstructs you. What do (i.e. can) I do? I did this for maintaining truthfulness. Knowing your prowess I came (here) for the protection of my devotee. This (king Vīramaṇi) formerly bathed in the river called Śiprā and practised wonderful penance in the temple of Mahākāla at Ujjayinī. Then, I who was pleased,

said to the king: 'O great King, ask for (your desired object).' He chose a wonderful kingdom. I said to him: 'Your kingdom (i.e. rule) will be in Devapura. I shall diligently dwell for your protection in your city till Rāma's sacrificial horse comes (to your city)'. O Rāma, I who granted such a boon, am really your servant. I am now pitied (by you). The king will give back (i.e. restore) the horse along with his sons and beasts; and he will offer service to (your) feet."

Śeṣa said:

18. Hearing these words of Maheśa (i.e. Śiva), the best of Raghus (i.e. Rāma) with his eyes full of pity spoke with a grave voice:

Rāma said:

19-22. It is but the duty of the gods to protect their devotees. You have done an auspicious deed, since you have now protected your devotee. O Śiva, you are in my heart (and) I am in your heart. There is no distinction between us. (Only) the wicked-minded fools see (the distinction, i.e. they look upon us to be different). Those men who make distinction between us who are indeed of the same nature are roasted for a thousand kalpas in (the hell called) Kumbhīpāka. Those who are your pious devotees were (i.e. are) my devotees only; and my devotees also salute you with great devotion.

Śeṣa said:

23-36. The lord (i.e. Rāma) having heard these words of Śiva revived the unconscious king Vīramaṇi by touching him etc. The able lord and god along with Śiva, also revived other unconscious sons of king Vīramaṇi, who were afflicted with arrows. Making the king ready, the lord of the beings (i.e. Śiva), made him, surrounded by his sons and grandsons, salute Rāma's feet. Blessed was king Vīramaṇi who saw the best Raghu, difficult to be secured by meditating saints devoted to deep and abstract meditation even after myriads (of years). O best brāhmaṇa, having saluted Raghunātha (and thus) having their bodies rendered blessed, they became most venerable even to Brahmā etc. The king (Vīramaṇi) gave (back) the best horse

to Rāma who was praised by Śatrughna, Hanūmat and (other) great warriors like Puṣkala. The king Vīramaṇi urged on by Śiva then gave (Rāma) everything along with his kingdom and with sons, beasts and kinsmen. Then Rāma was praised by all his enemies and servants, and especially by Śatrughna and others, who were very much eager. Seated in a jewelled chariot he then disappeared. When Rāma disappeared, all were amazed. Do not look upon that Rāma who alone is saluted by the world, as a human being. Being in water or on the land he is always present everywhere. At that time the heroes were thoroughly delighted and embraced one another. A great festivity with (the sound of) musical instruments and auspicious instrumental music, took place. Then all the heroes who were pleased and amazed, and who were proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, followed the horse that was released. Having directed that servant (viz. Vīramaṇi), telling him to seek the refuge of Śrī Rāma, the only one difficult to be obtained in the world, Śiva, of a truthful vow, and the author of the deluge and creation, disappeared there. Adorned with (i.e. accompanied by) his servants, Śiva went to Kailāsa.

37-38. King Vīramaṇi meditating upon the lotus-like feet of Śrī Rāma and accompanied by his army, went along with the mighty Śatrughna. For those excellent men who listen to this story of Rāma, there is never the misery due to the mundane existence.

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

The Sacrificial Horse Develops Stiffness

Śeṣa said:

1-6. Then, O brāhmaṇa, the horse went to Hemakūṭa close to Bhārata. The horse with chowries tied (on to his body) was protected by thousands of warriors. That Hemakūṭa was (many) yojanas in expanse and length on all sides and had myriads of silver and golden peaks. There was an excellent

garden adorned with trees (like) śāla, tāla, tamāla, karṇikāra, hiṁtāla, nāga-punnāga, kovidāra and bilva, also campaka, bakula, megha (a kind of fragrant grass), madana, kuṭaja and others. It was also adorned with creepers like jātikā, yūthikā and navamālikā (varieties of jasmine), so also with mango-trees, vines with sweet grapes, and pomegranates. It was noisy with many birds; it was resounding with (the humming of) bees. It had the sounds of peacocks' notes. It gave joy in all seasons.

7-13. Accompanied by Śatrughna the horse which had mind's speed and had a charming golden note on his large forehead (came there). While that horse (let loose) for the horse-sacrifice, was (thus) going, suddenly a wonder took place. Listen to it, O best brāhmaṇa. His body became stiff, and he did not move, but (just) stood on the path. The best horse became immovable like the Hemakūṭa. Then all the guards of the horse gave him strokes with whips. Even though he was (thus) beaten (i.e. whipped) the horse with his body having become stiff, did not move (on). The guards of the horse, having approached Śatrughna, cried: "O lord, we do not know what has happened to (our) excellent horse. O you very intelligent king, when the excellent horse having mind's speed, was proceeding, there was a sudden stiffness in his body. We whipped him, but he did not move. O best king, having considered this, take whatever action (you deem proper)."

14-21. Then the king who was amazed, went along with his soldiers near the great horse. Puṣkala seized his feet with his hand, and lifted (i.e tried to lift) him up from the ground. But he did not move from it (i.e. from the ground). Though attacked by the strong one the horse did not move at that time. Large-hearted Hanūmat decided to lift him up. The best among the powerful ones encircled him strongly with his tail, and with (great) might dragged (i.e. tried to drag) him. Yet he did not move. Then, Hanūmat, the best monkey, being amazed said to Śatrughna, the greatest among the mighty, when the heroes were listening (i.e. in the presence of the heroes): "(Encircling) Droṇa with my tail, I now (i.e. recently, had) lifted it up easily. But it is a great wonder now that this (comparatively) small horse does not move. The excited, strong heroes have in this

case realised the general cause: Even though dragged, he did not move from his place as much as (the measure of) a sesamum seed." Having heard the words of the monkey Śatrughna, the best among speakers, said to Sumati, the best of the ministers.

Śatrughna said:

22. O innocent minister, why is there the stiffness in the body of the horse? Why (for what cause) is there stiffness in the horse's body, O innocent one? What remedy should be employed here, so that the horse can move?

Sumati said:

23. O lord, some sage proficient in all (branches of) knowledge should be looked for. I know only what actually occurs in a region and is perceptible but do not know what is concealed from the senses.

Śeṣa said:

24-29. Hearing these words of Sumati he, the knower of dharma, looked, along with his servants, for an auspicious sage. All the soldiers going everywhere looked for a sage, a knower of dharma. But, nowhere did they find the best sage. But one diligent follower (of the horse) went as far as (the distance of) a yojana in the east. There he saw a great hermitage where all beasts and men also had no enemies, (as) the very charming ones had all their sins destroyed due to a bath in Gaṅgā, where many (sages) practised penance with fire. With their faces hung down, they filled their bellies with (i.e. subsisted on) smoke, leaves and air; where the smoke rising from the sacred fire always purified (everything). It was happy with many sages and was excellent due to creepers with their leaves taken off.

30-32. He, coming to know that the charming hermitage belonged to the sage Śaunaka, reported it to the king with his heart full of wonder. Hearing that Śatrughna along with his servants became extremely glad. Along with Hanūmat, Puṣkala and others he went to that hermitage. Having seen there the best sage who had properly offered oblation to the fire, he

saluted (prostrating before him) like a staff, his feet destroying sins.

33-36. Seeing king Śatrughna, best among the mighty, coming (there), he offered him materials of worship and water for washing the feet; and became glad on seeing him. The best sage seeing him comfortably seated and resting said to the king: "O lord, why are you wandering? Your wandering is great. If, kings like you do not roam over the entire earth, then the wicked will harass the good who are free from affliction. O king, Śatrughna, the best among the mighty, tell me (why you are wandering like this). May all your wandering etc. be for our good."

Śeṣa said:

37. The king with his body delighted replied in a faltering tone to the brāhmaṇa who was speaking like this.

Śatrughna said:

38-41. Not far away from your abode all of a sudden a wonder took place in the case of Rāma's horse having the mind's speed. O best among the wise, hear (about) it. The horse by chance went into your garden rich in beauty. In its skirt there developed stiffness in his body (just) in a moment. Then my mighty heroes like Puṣkala, fierce with madness, forcibly dragg-ed the horse. Yet he did not move. Due to our good fortune you who are known to be a boat for us who are drowned into the boundless ocean of misery, are seen by chance. Tell us the cause (of the stiffness of the horse's body).

Śeṣa said:

42-43. The best and very intelligent sage, when asked like this, mentally conceiving the horse along with the cause (of its stiffness), thought for a moment. Having in a moment known it with his eyes dilating with amazement, he said to the king who was grieved and full of doubt.

Śaunaka said:

44-55. O king, listen, I shall tell you the cause of the stiffness (of the body) of the horse, hearing which you will be free from

misery. Such is the strange account. In the Gauḍa country in a great forest adorned by the bank of Kāverī, a brāhmaṇa named Sāttvika practised a great (i.e. severe) penance. One day he drank water. One day he ate (i.e. subsisted on) air. One day he did not eat anything. In this way he would pass three days. When he was thus engaged in the vow Death himself seized him with his fangs; (and) the observer of the great vow met with death. Playing with celestial nymphs in a divine car, rich in all (kinds of) beauty and adorned with all gems, he went to the peak of Meru. There was a great Jambu tree, the fluid from which was enjoyable. (There was) a river called Jāmbavatī, full of golden water. In it, sages, meritorious due to many (kinds of) penance, and having all pleasures, sported eagerly according to their desires. There he (i.e. Sāttvika) joyfully playing at his will with the celestial nymphs, being arrogant due to pride on account of his high opinion about himself, acted disagreeably with them. Then he was cursed by the sages: "Be a hideous demon." Then, he being extremely afflicted said to the sages, rich in knowledge and penance: "May all you kind brāhmaṇas favour me." He was then favoured by them: "When you will speedily stiffen (Rāma's) horse, you will hear Rāma's account. After that you will be free from this very fierce cause." O lord, that brāhmaṇa thus addressed by the sages became a demon. He has stiffened Rāma's horse. Free him by narration (of Rāma's account), O sinless one.

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

The Horse Is Relieved of Stiffness

Śeṣa said:

1. He who killed the enemy's heroes, having heard what the sage told, was amazed at heart, and said to Śaunaka:

Śatrughna said:

2-3. The way of fate is mysterious, due to which that (brāhmaṇa) named Sāttvika, though he had reached heaven (i.e.

had become divine), was made a demon by his deeds. O lord, O great sage, tell me about the path (i.e. the consequence) of deeds, and which hell is (obtained by beings) due to the result of which deeds.

Śaunaka said:

4-36. O best among the descendants of Raghu, you are blessed that you have such a good thought. Though you know (it) you are saying (i.e. asking about) for the good of the people. I (shall) tell (you about) various results of various deeds. O great king, listen to them. Hearing (about) them one would obtain salvation. He, of a wicked mind, who forcibly seizes the wealth of others, the child of another person, and another's wife for the sake of enjoyment, is dropped after being tied with Yama's noose into the Tāmisra hell for a thousand years. There the arrogant servants of Yama beat him up. Then tormented by the fruition of his sins, he goes to (i.e. is born in) the species of pigs. Having experienced great misery there he goes to human species (i.e. is born as a human being) which is characterised by diseases etc. and which acquaints him with his infamy. He engaged in (committing) sins, deceives (other) beings, and feeds his own family only. He would fall into (the hell called) Andhatāmisraka. Those men who kill beings here (i.e. in this world) wrongly fall into (the hell called) Raurava and are eaten up by ruru (deer). He who, for (filling) his own belly, plainly kills (other) beings, is, through Yama's order, dropped into (the hell called) Mahāraurava. He, the sinner, who hates his own father or a brāhmaṇa, (is dropped) into the vicious (hell called) Kālasūtra extending over a myriad yojanas. He who hates cows is roasted for as many years as the hair on (the bodies of) the beasts by Yama's servants. That king who would, on the earth, punish him who does not deserve punishment or that greedy king who gives physical punishment to a brāhmaṇa, is harassed by Yama's servants having faces like those of pigs. Then for being free from (his) sins he is born in wicked stocks. Those men who through their might foolishly snatch or destroy the little wealth of brāhmaṇas or the means of subsistence of cows, are oppressed very much, and are thrown into (the hell called) Andhakūpa in the other world. He who being greedy brings and

eats all alone sweet food, and intent on tasting (i.e. enjoying) it does not give it either to a deity or to his friend, certainly falls into the hell called Kṛmibhojana. That man who, when not facing a calamity, would snatch away gold etc. or the wealth of a brāhmaṇa, would fall into the very vicious hell (called) Sandaṁśa. The fool who nourishes his own body (only) and does not know (i.e. care for) anyone else, is dropped into the very terrible hell (called) Kumbhīpāka hot with oil. The servants of Yama make the man who would, through folly, desire an unapproachable lady to be his wife, embrace her metallic image (in hell). Those who, insolent through their might, violate the propriety of conduct as laid down by the Vedas, fall into Taraṇī and become eaters of flesh and blood. He who having made a śūdra woman his wife would lead the householder's life withher, is full of great misery and certainly falls into the Pūyoda (hell). Those fools, those rogues who practise religious hypocrisy for cheating people, are beaten by Yama and fall into Vaiśasa hell. Those fools, those sinners who make their wives of the same caste drink their semen, are engaged in drinking semen in a stream of semen. Thieves, those who set fire, those who are wicked, those who administer poison, those who plunder villages, being full of sins, are thrown into Sārameyādana (hell). A man who, full of sin, forcibly snatches the wealth of others, falls with his face downwards into Avīcinaraka. Having experienced much misery there he would go to (i.e. would be born in) the most sinful stock. The servants of Yama make him, the foolish man who through (sheer love of) taste drinks liquor, drink liquid iron. That man who through the pride of his knowledge and conduct, would disregard his elders, is after death thrown with his face downwards into the Kṣāranaraka. Those men who deviating from righteous conduct commit treachery, are thrown into the hell (called) Śūlaprota full of many torments. That wicked man who inflicts pain on all men through his words, falls into the Daṇḍaśūka (hell) and is bitten by snakes. Thus, O king, there are many hells for the sinners. Having committed sins they go (to them); and these (sinners) experience terrible agony. Those who have not listened to the story of Rāma or have not obliged others, have all (kinds) of miseries in hell. It is said that he who has happiness here,

would have it in heaven. Those who are miserable and diseased, have come from hell.

Śeṣa said:

37-39. Hearing this the king, trembling every moment, again asked the brāhmaṇa to get all his doubts removed. (He said:) "O great sage, tell (me) the characteristics of the respective sins. Due to which sin, and having which characteristics, is (a man) born on the earth?" Hearing those words of him, the sage said to the king: "O king, listen, I shall tell (you) the characteristics of the sinners."

Śaunaka said:

40-69. One who drinks liquors and one having black teeth is born in hell. One who eats what is prohibited, is born as one having chronic enlargement of the spleen. He who eats (food) seen by a woman in her course, is born as one who has worms in his belly. Having eaten (food) touched by a dog, a cat etc. a man would be of (i.e. give out) foul smell. A man who eats (food) without offering (it) to gods etc. has a disease in his belly, is unhappy, and is troubled by a great malady. By creating obstacles in the food of others (i.e. by spoiling their food), indigestion takes place (in the body of the man who spoils others' food). He who though he has wealth (i.e. though he can afford to give good food), gives bad food, has slow digestion. A man who gives (i.e. administers) poison, gets vomitting sickness; he who kills (a person) on the way, has a disease in his feet. A wicked man is born as one suffering from asthma and cough in hell. A rogue would suffer from epilepsy; and he who torments others would suffer from colic. He who causes forest conflagration would suffer from dysentery. He who would throw dung into a temple or into water, would suffer from a very terrible disease of the anus (as) a manifestation of his sin. The diseases caused by miscarriage are consumption, urinary diseases and dropsy. A man who breaks the image (of a deity), does not have stability (in life). One who speaks wickedly becomes maimed; one who censures others becomes bald-headed. A man who laughs at what others say becomes squint-eyed; he who steals gold of a brāhmaṇa has bad nails. He who steals copper becomes

corpulent. He who steals bell-metal becomes a leper. A man who snatches tin has his hair tawny. A man who takes away lead suffers from headache. A man who steals iron becomes a blockhead. A man who steals hide is surrounded by (i.e. full of) fat. A man who steals honey smells like a goat. By stealing oil a man is extremely troubled by itch. By stealing raw food a man becomes toothless; and by taking away cooked food he would suffer from a disease of the tongue. By copulating with his teacher's wife a man suffers from strangury. By copulating with his sister he becomes a leper. So also by cohabiting with his daughter he suffers from leprosy. By cohabiting with his brother's wife he suffers from leprosy called gulma-kuṣṭha. By cohabiting with her who is approachable only by his master, he suffers from leprosy with red spots on the cheeks. By cohabiting with the wife of his confidant he suffers from ring-worm. By having sexual intercourse with his father's sister he would have boils in the right side of his body. By cohabiting with his maternal uncle's wife he would have boils on the left side of his body. He has leprosy on his waist by cohabiting with the wife of his paternal uncle. By having sexual intercourse with his friend's wife he becomes one whose wife dies (i.e. becomes a widower). By having sexual intercourse with a woman of his own family he suffers from fistula in the anus. One who cohabits with a famale ascetic suffers from urinary disease. By having sexual intercourse with the wife of a learned brāhmaṇa he suffers from ulcer in the nose. By cohabiting with the wife of him who is initiated a man has a flow of defective blood. He who cohabits with the wife of his kinsman suffers from the ulcer of the heart. He who has sexual intercourse with a woman of a higher caste suffers from the ulcer of the head. By cohabiting with a beast he suffers from a urinary disease. There is no doubt that men suffer from these diseases in hell. Women also suffer from these diseases by having sexual intercourse with the respective men. Thus, O king, the characteristics of great sinners are narrated. The sin would perish by means of religious merit due to charity, by hearing Rāma's deeds, or by (practising) penance. The river of the narration of the deeds of Viṣṇu would wash all the sins—the mud—of the sinners. There should be no doubt about this. (Even) Gaṅgā does not purify him who despises Hari. Even very meritorious holy places are not

able to purify him. He who being weak in knowledge (i.e. being ignorant) laughs at the deeds being narrated, does not get freedom from hell even at the end of the world. O king, go with your followers for freeing the horse. Relate the deeds of the lord of Śrī, so that the horse would move.

Śeṣa said :

70-76. Having heard this, Śatrughna, the killer of the enemy's heroes, became delighted and accompanied by his servants saluted him, and turning back went (back). Having, with Hanūmat, gone to the side of (i.e. near) the excellent horse, he narrated Rāma's deeds destroying terrible misfortunes. "Go (in) to the divine vehicle due to the religious merit obtained by the narration (of the deeds) of Rāma. Move freely in the world. Be free from the bad birth." When after having these words Śatrughna stood by, he saw an excellent (man) borne in a divine car. He said: "By listening to the narration (of the deeds) of Rāma, I have become free. O very intelligent king, I (shall) go to my abode. Give me leave to go." Saying so the divine one seated in his divine car, left. At that time, the followers (of Śatrughna) along with Śatrughna were amazed. Then the horse was free from the stiffness and the ground; and wandering through that forest full of birds proceeded.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

King Suratha Seizes the Horse

Śeṣa said :

1-3. Seven months passed as the horse easily roamed over Bhāratavarṣa full of kings. He going round all the excellent Bhārata (country) was honoured by excellent kings. Surrounded by excellent warriors and mighty soldiers like Śatrughna he roamed over many countries near the Himālayas. Taking into consideration Rāma's might nobody seized him.

4-11. Praised by the kings of Aṅga, Vaṅga and Kaliṅga the horse went to the beautiful city of Suratha. The city was named

Kuṇḍala, where the ear-rings fell from Aditi's ears trembling with joy and fear. There no man ever violated religious laws. The people there remembered Rāma everyday. There everyday men, Rāma's servants, free from sins, worshipped Aśvattha and Tulasī. There everyday men of pure hearts, free from fraud, worship charming temples having Rāma's idols. There is the name of Rāma (told) in words and never the account of a quarrel. In the heart he alone is meditated on, and no memory of sex finds a place. There men whose bodies are purified by the story of Rāma and who have assiduous devotion to truth, never indulge in gambling. In it lives the mighty and righteous (king) Suratha whose mind is delighted by recollecting Rāma's feet, and is very mad (after Rāma).

12-17. How shall I describe the excellent servant of Rāma, viz. Suratha, whose all virtues spread on the earth purify sins? Once the servants of that king saw, while they were wandering, the sacrificial horse smeared with sandal (-paste). When they saw the note (on the forehead) of the horse, which had clear letters, they were amazed. Knowing that the horse which was charming to the eye, was released by Rāma, they were delighted; and being eager they told (about him) to the king who was in the assembly: "O lord, there is the city Ayodhyā. Its lord is Rāma. The horse which is fit for a horse-sacrifice and which is released (by Rāma), has, while wandering, reached along with the servants the vicinity of your city. O great king, seize that very charming horse."

Śeṣa said :

18. Hearing these words uttered by his (servants), the king, being full of joy, said to his strong heroes in a voice grave like (the thundering of) the clouds:

Suratha said :

19-20. We are blessed that with our servants we shall see the face of Rāma. I shall seize his horse surrounded by a crore of warriors. I shall release the horse when Rāma would come. The object of me, the devotee, always engaged in meditating (on Rāma) will be fulfilled.

Śeṣa said :

21-24. Saying so, the king ordered his servant: "Forcibly seize the horse. The horse should not be released. He (should be kept) within sight. By this, I think I shall have a great gain in that I shall see Rāma's feet, difficult to be obtained by Brahmā, Indra and others. He, one's relative, or son, or kinsman, or beast or vehicle, alone is blessed, by whom Rāma would be obtained. Therefore, seizing the sacrificial horse which has the speed he desires, which is charming, and which is adorned with a golden note, tie him in the stable."

25-26. They who were thus addressed, went and quickly seized Rāma's horse and gave him whose entire body was auspicious, to the king. The king, the destroyer of the demons and proficient in righteous deed, gladly received him, and said to his mighty servants:

27-35. "O very intelligent Vātsyāyana, listen attentively. No man in his (i.e. Rāma's) country was attached to another man's wife. No man was attracted to another man's wealth, and no one was lustful. No man was attached to (things liked by) the tongue, and went along a wrong path; (everyone) would narrate (nothing else) but (the deeds of) Rāma." The king said to his servants: "You skilled in religious deeds have come to serve; tell (me) your movements. (In my country) men have the vow of having one wife only (i.e. were loyal to their wives). They do not crave for others' wealth. They are not attached to censuring others. They have not gone away from the course laid down by the Vedas. The warriors everyday do recollection etc. of Rāma. I who am angry towards Yama, keep them for service to Rāma. I do not allow those wicked, sinful men, behaving in the opposite way, to reside in my country." In his country did not live the most sinful ones who mentally committed sins. (There lived people whose) all sins were destroyed by meditation on Hari and were full of joy. When the country was like this and the king was religious, all the men that died (i.e. after death) obtained bliss. In the city of Suratha there was no entrance for the servants of Yama.

36-38. Then Yama taking up the form of a sage came to the king. He having put on garments of the barks of trees and with

his head adorned with matted hair, saw Suratha, the servant of Viṣṇu, in his assembly. He had the Tulasī (-leaf) on his head and uttered the great name of Hari. He always made his people listen to (i.e. narrated to his people) the accounts dealing with religious deeds. Then the king, seeing the sage who was, as it were, penance incarnate, saluted his feet and gave him water for washing his feet etc. The best king said to the sage who was comfortably seated and who was resting:

39-41. "Today my existence is blessed; today my house is blessed. Tell me various excellent stories about Rāma, hearing which the sin of the hearers perishes everyday." Hearing these words uttered (by the king) the sage, showing all his teeth, laughed very much and clapped his palms. (The king) said to the sage who was laughing: "What is the reason for your laughing? (i.e. what made you laugh)? Kindly tell me so that my heart will be pleased." Then the sage said to the king:

42-54. "O king, listen attentively to the excellent reason for (my) laughter. You told me: To me narrate the glory of Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu). Who is Hari? Whose glory (should I narrate)? All men are influenced by their deeds (i.e. fate). Due to deeds heaven is obtained; due to deeds (one) would go to hell. Due to deeds alone, all (things) like sons and grandsons would (be had). Indra after performing a hundred sacrifices went to the highest position. Brahmā also obtained the wonderful world called 'Satya' due to his deeds (i.e. his fate). Many gods like Maruts who became successful due to their deeds enjoy, being served by the hosts of celestial nymphs, pleasures. Therefore, perform sacrifices etc. and indeed worship deities, so that you will have spotless fame on the earth." Hearing these words of him he, with his mind agitated with anger and with his heart fixed on Rāma alone, spoke to the brāhmaṇa skilled in (various) acts: "Do not say (anything) about the account of deeds giving a perishable fruit. You who are condemned by the world, go out of my city. Indra will quickly fall down. Brahmā also will fall down, but men eager for Rāma's worship will not fall. See Dhruva, Prahlāda and the wonderful Bibhīṣaṇa. So also others who are Rāma's devotees never fall. These servants of Yama will beat with iron mallets and by binding with nooses, those wicked ones who condemn Rāma.

O mean brāhmaṇa, I do not punish you due to your brāhmaṇa-hood (i.e. because you are a brāhmaṇa). Go, go away from my sight; otherwise I shall beat you."

55-63. When the greatest king called Suratha, his servants were eager to drive him out by holding him with his arm, then Yama taking up his own (i.e. original) form, adorned by people, said to the king: "O servant of Viṣṇu, I am pleased; ask for (what you want). O you of a good vow, though I tempted (i.e. tried to lead astray) you with many words, you, served by the good, did not swerve from service to Rāma." Then the king, seeing Yama very much pleased, said: "If you are pleased, then grant me an excellent boon. Let me not meet with death till I meet Rāma. O Yama, let me never have fear from you." Then Yama said to the king: "This will take place in your case. The chief of the Raghu (family) will truly do everything desired by you." Saying so Yama praising the deeds of him who had set his heart on the devotion to Rāma, vanished and went to his own city. That righteous king, the servant of Rāma, seized the horse with great joy and said to the servants of Viṣṇu: "I have seized this horse of Rāma, the lord of the earth. All of you, skilled in fighting, should be ready everywhere."

64-69. Thus told, all the very powerful soldiers of the king became ready in a moment, and being eager (i.e. eagerly) went to the assembly. The king's ten brave sons were: Campaka, Mohaka, Ripuñjaya, Durvāra, Pratāpin, Balamodaka, Haryakṣa, Sahadeva, Bhūrideva and Sutāpana. These ten sons of the king became ready on the battlefield. Full of great enthusiasm they desired to march (against Śatrughna). The king too called his bright chariot fashioned with the beauty of gold and adorned with horses having excellent speed. The king having enthusiasm to fight, surrounded by the entire army, stood directing all his servants in the assembly.

CHAPTER FIFTY

Aṅgada Delivers Śatrughna's Message to Suratha

Śeṣa said:

1-6. Then the younger brother of Rāma came (there) and asked his servants: Where is the very charming sacrificial horse?" At that time those very mighty heroes said (these) words to Śatrughna: "We do not know. Some warriors took the horse and went into a city; and all of us were despised by the mighty servants of the king. You are now the authority as to what should be done now." Hearing those words of them, Śatrughna became very angry and the hero gnawing his teeth and repeatedly licking (his lips) with his tongue said: "Snatching my horse where will you go? Now (only) I shall ruin with (my) arrows (your) city with the people (i.e. the inhabitants)." Saying so, he said to Sumati: "Whose city is this? Who is its lord that took away my horse?"

Śeṣa said:

7-12. Hearing these angry words of the king the minister spoke in a sweet voice words with distinct syllables: "Know this to be a very charming city named Kuṇḍala. The righteous, mighty kṣatriya Suratha lives here. He is always given to religious conduct and is the servant of the couple of feet of Rāma; he is Rāma's servant like Hanūmat by thought, deeds and speech. There are hundreds of (good) deeds of this righteous (king) Suratha who is all-good, has a retinue of very strong (soldiers). If the best horse is snatched away, there would be a great war here. Many heroes skilled in fighting will fall (in the battle)." Having heard (the words) thus spoken, Śatrughna, the killer of the heroes of his enemy and the best among the eloquent, again said these words to (his) minister.

Śatrughna said:

13. How should we act here if he has snatched away Rāma's horse? He does not come to fight with (our) army which is strong and served by heroes?

Sumati said:

14-16. O great king, an eloquent messenger should be sent to the king, by (hearing) whose words the best among the strong will come along with his army. Or, the horse might have been carried away through ignorance by some proud (person). He will give us (back) the excellent, auspicious, sacrificial horse.

Hearing these words of (i.e. spoken by) him, the intelligent and powerful Śatrughna said these polite words to Aṅgada.

Śatrughna said:

17-19. You (please) go to Suratha's great city which is nearby. Having gone (there) as a messenger say to the king: "You have taken away knowingly or unknowingly Rāma's horse. Give him (back); or go in for a fight along with your warriors." O you, who are endowed with the greatest might and who are intelligent, act as a messenger in the same way as you acted as the messenger of Rāma to Rāvaṇa in Laṅkā.

Śeṣa said:

20-22. Hearing these (words) and saying, 'Yes' to the king, Aṅgada went to (Suratha's) assembly full of groups of warriors. He saw (there) king Suratha holding Tulasī-sprouts and telling (about) Rāma to his own servants. The king too seeing the monkey having a charming body and knowing him to be Śatrughna's messenger and Vālin's son, said to him.

Suratha said:

23. O lord of the monkeys, how and for what purpose have you come here? Tell me the full reason so that knowing it I shall do that (what is proper).

Śeṣa said:

24-29. The lord of the monkeys very much wondering in his heart said to the king who was speaking like this and who served Rāma: "O best king, know me to be Vālin's son, the lord of the monkeys. I have been sent to you as a messenger by Śatrughna. O king, some of your servants came and have now suddenly and unknowingly taken away my horse, (and thus)

have done an unjust act. Go gladly to Śatrughna and having fallen at his feet quickly give the horse (back to him) along with your kingdom and sons. Otherwise, with your body wounded and deprived of your head by the arrows discharged by Śatrughna you will lie adorning the surface of the earth. Where will you go by snatching the sacrificial horse of him who easily in a moment destroyed the lord of Laṅkā?

Śeṣa said:

30-35. The lord of the earth, replied to him (i.e. to Aṅgada) who was speaking like this. "You are saying everything that is proper. Your words are not untrue. But listen to my words, O servant of Śatrughna's feet. I have seized the great horse of the intelligent Rāmacandra. Through the fear of Śatrughna and others I will not at all release him. If Rāma himself will come and appear before me, then (only) I with my sons will, after saluting his feet, give him my entire kingdom, much wealth, corn and army. If Rāma would not come, I shall now even in a moment conquer the great warriors like Śatrughna and bind them in my house."

Śeṣa said:

36. Hearing this, the intelligent Aṅgada laughed at the king; and said very important words with great courage.

Aṅgada said:

37-48. You, being devoid of understanding due to your old age, are speaking (like this)! That (i.e. understanding) has left you, since you, strengthened by your devotion (to Rāma) are despising Śatrughna who easily killed the demon Lavaṇa, the enemy of king Māndhātṛ, who killed many very strong and insolent warriors in battles. You are binding (i.e. thinking of binding) that lord of warriors who killed Vidyunmālin seated in (a vehicle) moving according to the occupant's desire. You appear to me to be devoid of wisdom. Śatrughna's brother's son Puṣkala is very mighty and knows (the use of) great missiles. Śatrughna has very much pleased Vīrabhadra, the attendant of Rudra. How can I describe his great valour earned through his might, resembling whom in might, fame or glory, there is none

on the earth? Near him remains Hanūmat who has (set) his heart on the lotus-like feet of Rāma, whose (i.e. of Hanūmat) many deeds will be heard (i.e. known) by you, who in a moment forcibly burnt the demon's (i.e. Rāvaṇa's) city (Laṅkā) along with the Trikūṭa mountain, who killed Akṣa, the son of the wicked lord of demons, who repeatedly brought the mountain Droṇa along with the deities in it on the tip of his tail for reviving the soldiers. Rāma (alone) knows his uprightness. None else who is a dunce, knows it; him, the lord of monkeys, his servant, Rāma does not forget (even) a little from his heart. All the lordly monkeys like Sugrīva who live on the earth, serve king Śatrughna. They are eager to see (the horse). (So also there are others like) Kuśadhvaja, Nīlaratna, Riputāpa knowing (the use of) great missiles, (and) Pratāpāgrya, Subāhu, Vimala and Sumada. (So also) king Vīramaṇi, full of truth (i.e. truthful), is the servant of the king. These and other kings serve him.

49-50. There (i.e. among them), who are you (but) a mosquito in the ocean, O hero? Realising that, go (i.e. march) with your sons to the kind Śatrughna. Having given (back) the horse you will go to the lotus-eyed Rāma (and) seeing him you will make your limbs and your existence blessed.

Śeṣa said:

51-56. The king said to the messenger who was speaking in various ways: "You (will) immediately show them (to me, as) I do not know all (of them). O messenger, the might of Hanūmat who, taking Rāma on his back went to protect the sacrifice, is not as (great) as my own. If with devotion I worship Rāma mentally, with words and deeds, then he will quickly show me his body. Otherwise, let the heroes led by Hanūmat endowed with devotion bind me, and take (back) the horse speedily. (You) go to (my) enemy Śatrughna and tell him what I said. Let (your) good warriors be ready. This I, powerful one, am going to the battlefield. On the battlefield he will after thinking (properly) do what is proper. Let them free the great horse or give him to me."

Śeṣa said:

57. Having heard this and having smiled the hero went where the king (stayed), and having gone to him told him (everything) as was told by Suratha.

CHAPTER FIFTYONE

Hanūmat Frees Puṣkala from Campaka

Śeṣa said:

1-7. On hearing the words of Suratha from the mouth of (i.e. through) Aṅgada all (the soldiers) proficient in fighting and seated in their chariots became ready (to fight). There was the sound of the war-drums, so also of kettle-drums. On the battle-field the sounds of the roars of the soldiers arose. All the world was full of the sounds of the chariots and the trumpets of the elephants. The great sound (even) reached the sky. The soldiers skilled in fighting and full of enthusiasm for fighting made various sounds which scared the timid ones. When such a din took place, the king named Suratha surrounded by his sons and soldiers went to the battlefield. Pervading fully the earth with elephants, chariots, horses and hosts of foot-soldiers, and inundating it as the ocean (inundates it), he was seen with (or by) soldiers. Seeing that army resounding with the sounds of conches and also with cries of victory, and ready to fight, the king said to Sumati.

Śatrughna said:

8. The king surrounded with a huge army has come. O you very intelligent one, tell (me) what we should do now.

Sumati said:

9-10. Now many very fierce warriors like Puṣkala skilled in fighting and proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, should fight. The very strong, very brave son of Samīra (i.e. of

Vāyu, viz. Hanūmat), very proficient in fighting, should fight with king (Suratha).

Śeṣa said:

11-18. When the great minister was speaking like this, the haughty sons of the king indeed stretched their bows on the battlefield. Seeing them, the very strong, respected soldiers like Puṣkala who were furious in battles and who had bows and arrows in their hands and who were seated in their chariots, went (to fight). The great warrior Puṣkala knowing the (use of) great missiles, fought in a single combat in chariots with Campaka protected by a great hero. That Kuśadhvaja, son of Janaka, fought with Mohaka. Vimala (fought) with Ripuñjaya, Subāhuka with Durvāra. Pratāpāgrya (fought with) Pratāpin, and Aṅgada with Balamoda. Nīlaratna fought with Haryakṣa, and Satyavān with Sahadeva. The powerful king Vīramaṇi fought with Bhūrideva. Ugrāśva, endowed with might, fought with Asutāpa. (Those warriors) skilled in fighting, fought a great single combat in chariots. All of them were skilled in (the use of) weapons and missiles and were proficient in fighting. O best sage, when the fight with Suratha's sons thus started, there took place great destruction.

19-21. Puṣkala said to Campaka: "O prince, what is your name? You who have come (to fight) with me in the battlefield, are lucky. Now wait; why do you go? How would you live (now)? O you proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles, come to fight with me." Hearing these words of (i.e. spoken by) him the mighty son of the king said to Puṣkala with a tone grave like the (thundering of) the clouds:

Campaka said:

22-25a. Fight here will not take place with (i.e. depending upon) name or family. Yet I shall tell you my name preceded by (i.e. with) my might. My mother is lord Rāghava; my father is said to be Rāghava. My brother is Rāmacandra; and my kinsman is Rāghava (i.e. Rāma). My name is Rāmadāsa (i.e. Rāma's servant). I am ever Rāma's servant. Rāma who favours his devotees, will save me in the battle. Yet following the belief of the people (i.e. convention) I shall now describe (myself) to you.

25b-28. I am Suratha's son; and Vīravatī is my mother. My name is that (i.e. Campaka) which makes all lovely in the spring season. The bees attracted by honey abandon the abode of my juice drunk in the spring. In complexion I resemble gold. I have a mark in the centre. O hero, know me as having the attractive name which is the name (of that tree). Fight with me with arrows. Nobody is able to conquer me in a battle. I shall now show you my wonderful valour.

Śeṣa said:

29-31. Hearing these great (i.e. important) words Puṣkala was glad in heart. Taking him to be difficult to be conquered he discharged arrows in the battle. He went (i.e. marched against) Puṣkala who was discharging arrows in crores. (And) then Campaka, full of anger, made his bow ready. He discharged sharp arrows which destroyed the hosts of enemies, which were marked by his name, and which had golden-feathered ends.

32-37. The great hero Puṣkala discharging arrows sharpened on (whet-) stones and causing darkness everywhere with arrows, cut off those (arrows) on the battlefield. Seeing his arrows being cut off by the hero, Campaka, full of anger, challenged the mighty Puṣkala. Saying "Leaving the battlefield, do not go (away)" he again quickly pierced Puṣkala at his chest with ten arrows. Those arrows of a sharp speed came and stuck very much (i.e. very deep) into the chest of Puṣkala, and quaffed the powerful blood. Afflicted by those arrows the hero too, through great anger, took five arrows, holding them like mountains. These powerful arrows, and the arrows of him, arranged in the sky, were cut off in a hundred ways by the king's son.

38-41. The mighty son of Suratha having cut off the very sharp arrows, took up a hundred arrows and struck Puṣkala on the chest. Those arrows cut off into a hundred ways by the magnanimous Puṣkala and opposed by the speed of (his) arrows fell in the vicinity of the battlefield. Seeing that very great feat the mighty son of the king clearly struck him on his chest with a thousand arrows.

42-44. Puṣkala knowing (the use of) great missiles, quickly cut them off too; but he again immediately fixed a myriad arrows on his own bow. Puṣkala knowing (the use of) great missiles cut

them off too. Then being very angry he sent a shower of arrows. Perceiving that shower of arrows (coming to him), the destroyer of heroes, viz. Campaka, praising Puṣkala (with the words) "Well (done), well (done)", struck him. Seeing Campaka possessing great valour Puṣkala who knew (the use of) all weapons, fixed the missile of (i.e. presided over by) Brahmā on his bow.

45-48. The great missile discharged by him set ablaze the ten directions; and having pervaded the sky, the heaven and the earth, it was on the point of causing universal destruction. Campaka, proficient in (the use of) all missiles, seeing that missile discharged, discharged the same missile to kill his active enemy. People looked upon one of the two lustres as the final destruction of the world. The best missile united with the other one, destroyed it. Seeing that wonderful feat, Puṣkala saying, "Wait, wait", angrily struck Campaka with infallible arrows.

49-52. The magnanimous Campaka not caring for the arrows discharged (by Puṣkala), discharged the terrible missile called Rāmāstra towards Puṣkala. When he saw the missile discharged by the noble Campaka, and decided to cut it off, he was struck by an arrow. He was bound by the brave Campaka and was again put into his own chariot. The noble-minded one decided to send him to the city. When he named Puṣkala was bound there was great wailing. The warriors intent on fleeing, went to Śatrughna.

53-56. Seeing them routed, Śatrughna said to Hanūmat: "Which hero has completely defeated my army adorned with heroes?" O king, then he said: "This hero Campaka, firm in his position, is taking (away) the hero after tying him up." Hearing such (i.e. these) words of him, Śatrughna full of anger, said to Vāyu's son (i.e. Hanūmat): "Quickly free (him) from the king's son (i.e. Campaka) who, the very mighty one, has tied up (our) warrior Puṣkala, O best among the heroes, free him (i.e. Puṣkala) from him (i.e. Campaka). How do you delay in the battle?"

57-67a. Hearing these words, and saying "Yes", Hanūmat went to free Puṣkala from the hero Campaka. Seeing Hanūmat to have come to free him he, the very angry one, struck him with hundreds and thousands of arrows. He broke the arrows discharged by the noble one (i.e. Campaka). The mighty one

was again quickly discharging arrows at him. He pounded all those arrows discharged by the enemy. Taking a śāla (tree) in his hand he struck the king's son (with it). The strong one made the śāla discharged by him like (i.e. of the size of) sesamum-seeds. Hanūmat discharged an elephant on the head of the prince. He too was struck by Campaka, so he died and fell on the ground. Hanūmat knowing (the use of) great missiles, discharged rocks. By means of a mechanism controlling arrows Campaka greatly pounded all the rocks; O brāhmaṇa, it was a great wonder. Seeing that all the rocks discharged by him were pounded, Hanūmat thinking that he was very powerful, was very much angry at heart. The monkey (i.e. Hanūmat), seized him in his hand, and jumped into the sky. Campaka fought with that Hanūmat. The best monkey was very much beaten by him in a close fight. The hero, terrible on account of a mountain of (i.e. great) pride, was angry in his mind.

67b-71. Seizing Campaka by his foot, he dashed him on the ground. Struck by the lord of monkeys, the speedy one got up in a moment and seizing Hanūmat by his tail whirled him round. The lord of the monkeys seeing his power and laughing again seized him by his foot. Having whirled him for a hundred times he dropped him on the haunch of an elephant. That Campaka, the son of the king, fell on the ground. Adorning the battlefield rich due to being embellished by heroes, he fainted. At that time the men, the followers of Campaka, wailed. (Hanūmat) freed Puṣkala who was tied up from the noose of Campaka.

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

King Suratha Wins the Battle

Śeṣa said :

1-4. Seeing Campaka fallen Suratha, the mighty kṣatriya, with his body filled with grief, went, seated in a chariot (to the battlefield). Suratha who was very powerful, was angry and heaving heavy sighs, called (i.e. challenged) the monkey. Seeing the

king challenging him the very brave hero, the lord of monkeys, having great speed, went to (i.e. marched against) him. King Suratha with his beautiful voice deep-sounding like (that of) the clouds, seeing Hanūmat who despised great heroes coming, said:

Suratha said :

5-8. O best monkey, possessing great might and valour you who performed a great feat for Rāma in the demon's city, are blessed. You are the devoted servant of Rāma's feet. You, the hero, overthrew my mighty son Campaka. Now having tied you up I shall go to my city. O best among the lordly monkeys, wait carefully. I have told (you) what I thought to be the truth.

Hearing these words of Suratha the lord of the monkeys said with a grave voice (to him) on the battlefield adorned only by warriors.

Hanūmat said :

9-10. You remind (us) of Rāma's feet. We are the servants of Rāma's feet. If you bind me forcibly, my lord (Rāma) will free me. O hero, make true (i.e. carry out) the pledge that you have in your heart. (A man) who remembers Rāma goes to the end of (i.e. destroys) his misery. The Vedas say this.

Śeṣa said :

11-18a. Suratha having praised Vāyu's son (Hanūmat) like this, pierced him with many fierce arrows sharpened on a whetstone. Not minding those arrows discharged (by Suratha) and causing bloodshed, Hanūmat seized (Suratha's) bow ready with arrows with his hand. The angry monkey holding the bow in both his hands broke it; and shouting (i.e. with his shouts) he scared the warriors and tore them with his nails. Seeing that his bow with the string attached was broken by him (i.e. by Hanūmat), he took another bow adorned with a great (i.e. strong) string. The monkey angrily seized that bow also and broke it. He (i.e. Suratha) took another bow. The mighty (Hanūmat) broke that (also). When that bow was broken, he took another bow. He (i.e. Hanūmat) having a great energy, quickly broke

that bow also. Making great sounds in many ways every moment through great anger, he thus broke to pieces eighty bows of the king. Then (the king) getting very angry took (the missile) called Śakti.

18b-23. The hero (i.e. Hanūmat) struck by the Śakti fell down. (Then) in a moment being anxiously desirous (to defeat Suratha) he got up and, being very angry, seized the king's chariot. Seizing it he flew with a great speed toward the sea. Seeing him flying Suratha, the killer of his enemies, struck the active Hanūmat on his chest with iron-clubs. He dropped the chariot from a distance and in a moment it was shattered to pieces. Getting into another chariot he (i.e. Suratha) speedily went (i.e. rushed) to (Hanūmat), the son of Vāyu. Encircling the chariot along with the horses and the charioteer and with the banners, Hanūmat shattred it on the battlefield. Getting into another chariot, the very powerful king went (to attack Hanūmat). Hanūmat with his body getting strength violently broke it.

24-27. Seeing the chariot shattered Suratha got into another (chariot). He forcibly broke it along with the horses and the charioteer. In this way Hanūmat shattered fortynine chariots. Seeing that feat the king too along with his soldiers was amazed. Being angry he said to the lord of monkeys: "O son of Vāyu, acting bravely (like this) you are blessed. No one (but you) has done or will do this feat. O son of Vāyu, O bee (hovering round) the lotuses of the feet of Rāma, wait for a moment till I make my bow ready."

28-34. Saying so, and stringing the bow he, full of anger, fixed on his strong arrow the missile called Pāśupata (i.e. presided over by Paśupati). Then ghosts, friends, goblins, led by witches, frightening Hanūmat, suddenly appeared (there). The monkey was bound by the Pāśupata missiles. He was seen by the people (bound by the missiles). While they were wailing, the son of Vāyu remembering Rāma in his mind broke them in a moment. With his body freed he at once fought with king Suratha. Seeing him with his body freed Suratha, knowing (the use of) great missiles, taking him (i.e. Hanūmat) to be very strong, took the missile known as Brāhma (i.e. presided over by Brahmā). The strong Māruti laughed and swallowed the Brāhma missile. The king, the protector of the earth, seeing that (the missiles was) swallowed

by him, remembered Rāma. Remembering Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, he fixed the Rāma-missile (i.e. the missile presided over by Rāma) on his bow, and said these (words) to him: "O best monkey (now) you are bound."

35-39a. Having heard those words, when the hero Hanūmat, Rāma's servant, would go ahead, he was bound on the battle-field by the king with the Rāma-missile. To the king Hanūmat said: "O king, what do (i.e. can) I do now? You have bound me with the missile of (i.e. presided over by) my master, and not with any ordinary one. I respect it; O king, take me to your city. That abode of kindness, my master, will come and release me." When the son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat) was bound, the angry Puṣkala went to (i.e. marched against) the king. He pierced that Puṣkala who had come (like that) with many arrows. The mighty one struck the king with thousands of arrows.

39b-46. The king cut off many of his arrows on the battle-field. When that great warrior Puṣkala was thus angry in the battle, the entire world—immobile and also the mobile—was filled with arrows. Seeing their firm resolve to fight, the soldiers of gods were perplexed. Then what to say of (i.e. what can be said about) men who got scared in a moment! With the discharges of missiles and counter-missiles a fierce, thrilling battle took place among the warriors. Then the angry king took an arrow. But it was cut off by the arrows angrily discharged by Bharata's son (Puṣkala). When that arrow was cut off, the king took another. When he (i.e. Puṣkala) cut off (i.e. tried to cut off) that arrow, he was wounded on chest (with it) which stuck to (i.e. struck) his chest. Having fought a very great (i.e. fierce), wonderful battle with the king, the very lustrous and very intelligent Puṣkala fell into a swoon. When Puṣkala had fallen, Śatrughna who tormented his enemies, got angry with Suratha and seated in his chariot went (to him).

47-58. The very mighty brother of Rāma said to king Suratha: "You have done a great feat that you have bound the son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat). You have overthrown even the great hero Puṣkala and so also my other very mighty and brave warriors in the battle. Now wait. O king, where will you go by overthrowing my soldiers on the battlefield? Now put up with my arrows." Hearing these words of the hero, the mighty Sura-

tha having in his mind the charming lotus-like feet of Rāma, said: "In the battle I have knocked down your warriors waiting for Hanūmat. Now I shall overthrow you also on the battlefield. Recollect Rāma who, the hero, (will) himself come and protect you. Otherwise, O you tormentor of the enemies, you will not live before me." Saying so, the king struck him with thousands of arrows. He put the great Śatrughna into the cage of the volley of arrows. Śatrughna (trying to) avoid the volley of arrows, discharged a missile to burn the arrows with bent joints. The great king Suratha, seeing that missile discharged, destroying it with the Varuṇa missile (i.e. the missile presided over by Varuṇa), pierced him with crores of arrows. Then he fixed on his bow the wonderful missile given by the female devotee which deluded all heroes and made them sleep. The king seeing that great deluding missile remembered Viṣṇu and said to Śatrughna: "This one is proficient in (the use of) all weapons and missiles. No other delusion seems to be causing fear and tormentation to me who am deluded by the recollection of Śrī Rāma."

59-65. When the hero spoke like this, he discharged the great missile. Cut off by the arrow it fell on the battlefield. Seeing that the great missile was fruitless against the king, he being extremely amazed, fixed an arrow on his bow. The destroyer of great demons fixed on his bow that fierce arrow resembling fire in lustre with which Lavaṇa was killed. Seeing that (arrow) the king said: "This arrow sticks to (i.e. strikes) the chest of the wicked. It does not even remain in front of the devotee of Rāma." When he was saying like this, Śatrughna struck him with that arrow and pierced him in his chest (with it) resembling flames of fire. The tormentor of the enemies, afflicted by the arrow and full of great agony became unconscious for a moment in the interior of his chariot. Having in a moment overcome that agony he said to his enemy before him: "Endure one stroke of (i.e. given by) me. Where will you go from my presence?"

66-69. Speaking like this in the great battle he fixed on his bow an arrow full of flame of fire and having golden feathered ends. That arrow that was discharged from the bow and that remained on its way, though cut off by Śatrughna with the upper part of his (sword's) blade, fell upon his chest. Being rendered un-

conscious by that arrow, he fell on the chariot. The entire army that was defeated wailed and fled away. Suratha, the servant of Rāma, obtained victory in the battle. Then heroes rendered unconscious by his ten sons, fell somewhere.

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

Rāma Frees the Bound Heroes

Śeṣa said:

1-11. Seeing the army defeated and also seeing his master (lying) unconscious, Sugrīva went to fight with the king. "Come, O king, where are you going after rendering all the warriors unconscious? O you proficient in fighting, quickly fight with me." He possessing power saying so uprooted some huge tree with branches and struck it on his head. Due to that stroke the very mighty, very brave king looked at Sugrīva and angrily fixing sharp arrows (on his bow) struck them on his chest. Sugrīva laughed and at once foiled all those arrows. He, the very powerful one, struck Suratha on his chest. Tearing Suratha with his nails he violently struck him with mountains, peaks (of mountains), trees and bodies of elephants. With the very terrible missile called Rāma (i.e. presided over by Rāma) he quickly bound him also. The best monkey (i.e. Sugrīva) took Suratha to be a servant of Rāma. He became like an elephant which, having an iron chain hanging from his feet, cannot do anything. Putting all the warriors into his chariot he went to his own city. Going to his assembly, the very great one said to Hanūmat who was bound: "Remember the kind Raghunātha, the protector of his devotees, so that he of the best mind will instantly release you. Otherwise, even after a myriad years I shall not free you from bondage."

12-13. Having heard these words Hanūmat seeing himself tightly bound and the warriors unconscious and afflicted with the strokes of the enemy, remembered for freedom from the bondage Śrī Rāmacandra born in Raghu's dynasty, husband

of Sītā and having eyes like lotus-petals. With all his senses free from grief he remembered the kind one for his own freedom from bondage.

Hanūmat said:

14-17. O lord, O best among excellent men, O kind one, O lord of Śītā, O you whose face is charming on account of beautiful hair, O you who burn (i.e. destroy) the affliction of your devotees, O you having an attractive form, release me at once from the bondage. Do not tarry. O abode of pity, you freed (beings) like the excellent elephant, so also gods who were being profusely burnt by the fire of the family of demons, and you untied the hair-bonds on the heads of their beautiful wives. (Please) remember me. You are engaged in the performance of a sacrifice along with the best sages; you give a thought to religious merit, O you whose feet are praised by kings. O god, O Supreme Being, today I have been firmly tied with a noose by Suratha; quickly release me. If in spite of my remembering you very much, O you whose lotus-like feet are worshipped by excellent gods, you would not release me, then the manifested world would laugh at you; therefore do not delay in this matter; quickly release (me).

18-27. Hearing this (prayer), the Raghu-hero (i.e. Rāma), the lord of the world and the abode of kindness, quickly came by the Puṣpaka (aeroplane) to release his devotee. The monkey (i.e. Hanūmat) saw him who was well accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa who followed him, and Bharata, and who was accompanied by hosts of sages led by Vyāsa. Seeing his lord having come (he) said to the king: "O king, see Hari who has kindly come to free his own (devotee). Formerly, merely by being remembered he freed many votaries of him. In the same way he has come to free me tied with a noose." Seeing Śrī Rāmabhadra (who had) come there, that Suratha, full of the flood of devotion, in a moment saluted him hundreds of times. Śrī Rāma having four arms, embraced him with his arms; and, repeatedly sprinkling his devotee with tears of joy, he said: "Your body is blessed. You have done a great feat. You fully tied the powerful lord of monkeys—Hanūmat." Śrī Rāma freed thc excellent monkey from the bondage. He

looked at all those unconscious warriors and (merely) by (his) glance he revived them. They gave up their swoon (i.e. they regained consciousness). They were seen by Rāma serving gods. They got up and saw the charming Rāmacandra. They saluted the lord of Raghus. He enquired after their well-being.

28-32. Then Suratha, having seen Rāma to have come there for favouring his votary, gladly presented to him his entire kingdom along with the (sacrificial) horse. He pleased Śrī Rāma with (i.e. by giving him) many excellent garments. He said (to Rāma): "O Rāghava, I did an unjust act; (please) forgive me." Then Śrī Rāma said: "You have protected the (sacrificial) horse. It is the duty of kṣatriyas to fight along with the lord. You have done a good deed. The warriors are highly pleased on the battlefield." (The king) along with his sons (then) worshipped Viṣṇu in a human form (i.e. Rāma). Having stayed (there) for three days and having dismissed him with a blessing, the mighty Śrī Rāma along with the sages went back in the divine car (i.e. Puṣpaka) moving according to (the occupants') will. Seeing him (going like that) all of them were amazed and told (one another) charming stories about him.

33-37. The powerful and very mighty Suratha, having placed (his son) Campaka in his city, decided to go with Śatrughna. Śatrughna, having got (back) his horse, caused the kettledrums to be sounded. He (also) caused the various sounds of conches to be produced everywhere. The hero along with Suratha let loose the sacrificial horse. He roamed in foreign countries. (But) no powerful (man) seized him. Wherever the wandering horse went there Śatrughna along with great army and with Suratha also went. Once he (i.e. the horse) went to the excellent hermitage of Vālmīki which was resorted to by excellent sages and was marked with smoke in the morning (and which was situated) on the bank of Gaṅgā.

CHAPTER FIFTYFOUR

Lava Binds the Sacrificial Horse

Śeṣa said:

1-5. Jānakī's son Lava surrounded by sages' sons went to bring sacred fuel fit for the rites in order to perform the rites. There he saw the sacrificial horse marked with a golden note and made fragrant with the divine perfume of saffron, agaru (sandal) and musk. Seeing (the horse) and with curiosity aroused he said to the sons of the sages: "Whose horse having mind's speed has fortunately come to my hermitage? Come with me; observe (him); do not be afraid." Saying so that Lava quickly went near the horse. He born in the family of Raghu and standing near the horse, holding a bow and an arrow, stood invincible like Jayanta near the horse.

6-11. Having gone (there) with the sons of the sages he read the excellent note, shining with lines of distinct letters, and placed on the (horse's) forehead. "There is the great family of Vivasvat which is well-known in all the worlds; in which there is no one that is dependent or none that is greedy of another's wealth. To the family belongs Daśaratha who is the banner of the solar dynasty, who is a (great) archer, who is great, who is a teacher initiating (one) in (the science of using) a bow, whom all the deities with gods salute with their heads having (ornaments of) jewels (bent down). The noble Rāmacandra, descendant of Raghu, crest-jewel of all the brave, removing the pride of the might of the warriors, is his son. His (i.e. Rāma's) mother is the daughter of the king of Kośala, the producer of a jewel. From her womb was born a jewel of a son, Rāma who causes fear to his enemies, who is well-trained by a brāhmaṇa, is performing a horse-sacrifice to remove the sin due to his having killed the best brāhmaṇa, viz. Rāvaṇa.

12-17. He has let loose this sacrificial horse, chief among horses, surrounded by a large army and well-protected by moats. My brother Śatrughna, the killer of Lavaṇa, surrounded by an army consisting of the groups of elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers, is his protector. Let that king who has, through his conceit, the pride that he is great, or let those who think that they

are brave, they are best among the archers or that they are mighty here (i.e. on the earth), seize forcibly the horse adorned with a jewelled necklace, having the velocity of mind and moving at his will, and very bright due to his movement everywhere. From him (who has seized the horse) hurt by the arrow discharged from (Śatrughna's) bow, my brother Śatrughna will easily and forcibly free him. Let those kṣatriyas born from a kṣatriya girl (i.e. woman) or born in good families having good wives, seize him. Those of wrong bodies (i.e. those that are not proper kṣatriyas) should, after presenting their kingdom to Raghu (i.e. Rāma), salute him."

18-21. Having read like this, Lava, wielding a weapon and a bow, got angry, and with words faltering through anger said to the sons of the sages: "See quickly the audacity of that kṣatriya king who has written this in the note on the (horse's) forehead about his valour and might. Who is this Rāma? Who is Śatrughna? They are (but) insects having very little might. They are born in the family of kṣatriyas, and not we, the excellent ones? He does not have as his mother Sītā who has given birth to a hero—who has given birth to Kuśa, who had in her womb a gem called Kuśa, as the piece of wood (called Araṇi) used for kindling the sacred fire has fire (in it).

22-24. I shall now show on all sides my being a kṣatriya etc. If he is born of a kṣatriya and if he is killer of his enemy, he will take (back) this horse fit for the sacrificial rite, which is bound by me. Otherwise, he will abandon his kṣatriyahood and will worship Kuśa's feet. Now, with the arrows discharged from my bow he will lie down. So also the other great warriors, ornaments of the battlefield (will lie down)."

25-28a. Uttering these words, Lava, the best one, holding a bow and arrows, despising all kings, seized the horse. Then the sages' sons said to Lava who desired to seize the horse: "Rāma, the king of Ayodhyā, is very mighty and brave. Even Śakra (i.e. Indra), insolent through his power does not (dare) catch his horse. Do not seize him. Listen to these words of me (i.e. of us) which are beneficial." Hearing these words he said to the brāhmaṇa-sons:

28b-34. "O best brāhmaṇas, you do not know the power of kṣatriyas. Kṣatriyas are proud of their valour (while) brāh-

maṇas have food (only). Therefore, going home, you eat (whatever) is brought by your mothers." Thus told they remained quiet and watched the valour of that Lava. Those sons of sages remained away and out (of the range of the imminent fight). When this incident took place, the servants of that king (i.e. (Śatrughna) came (there, and) seeing the horse bound, they said to Lava: "Who has bound the horse? Oh, with whom is Yama angry? Who, being in the midst of volleys of arrows, will get (i.e. suffer from) a great agony?" Then Lava quickly said: "I have bound this excellent horse. With him who releases (i.e. tries to release) him, (my) great brother Kuśa will be angry. What will even lord Yama himself, after coming over here, do? Being very much pleased with the shower of arrows, he will salute (Kuśa) and go (back)."

Śeṣa said:

35-37. He holding the bow in both his hands discharged arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads at those servants of Śatrughna who had on hearing these words come there to release Rāma's horse that was bound and who said, "This is a child". They with their arms cut off went to Śatrughna through grief, and when asked (by him), they all told about the cutting off of their arms by Lava.

CHAPTER FIFTYFIVE

The Observation of the Spies

Vyāsa said:

1. Having heard this charming account of the powerful Lava the sage entertaining a doubt again asked the serpent (i.e. Śeṣa) having a thousand faces.

Śrī Vātsyāyana said:

2-3. Formerly you had said that Rāma due to the censure by a washerman and ardently longing for fame abandoned Sītā all

alone in the forest. Where were the two sons born to Jānakī (i.e. Sītā)? Where did they learn archery? How did they learn the science which enabled them to take away the horse of Rāma?

Vyāsa said:

4. Hearing these words of the sage, the very intelligent serpent Śeṣa praised the brāhmaṇa and narrated to him the wonderful deeds of Rāma.

Śeṣa said:

5-8. Protecting according to dharma a part of the earth, along with his wife Rāma ruled in Ayodhyā with his brothers. Sītā retained his semen (i.e. Sītā conceived), and five months had passed (i.e. her pregnancy was five months old). The queen shone very much like the triad (of Vedas) holding the Supreme Being. Some time Rāma asked (Sītā) the daughter of Videha (king Janaka): "What is your cherished wish? I shall fulfil it." The chaste lady, getting abashed, was asked in private only. With her words faltering through abashment she said these nectar(-like) words to Rāma:

Sītā said:

9-17. By your grace I have enjoyed everything and shall enjoy good (things). O dear one, no cherished wish remains in my mind. She whose lord is like you whose good feet are praised by gods, has all excellent (things). Nothing remains (to be secured). You are asking with persistence about the cherished wish present in my mind. (So) O you charming lord, I tell the truth to you. O lord, a long time has passed since I saw the chaste ladies like Lopāmudrā. O lord, my mind becomes eager to see those beautiful ladies. With you I obtained the kingdom and lived happily. I am ungrateful (as I have not seen them). Desirous of saluting them some time, I, having gone (to them) shall honour them, the treasures of penance, with garments etc. I shall also offer them bright gems and ornaments, so that the chaste ladies gratified by me will give me pleasant blessings. This, O dear one, is the longing in my mind. (Please) fulfil it.

Hearing these very charming words of Sītā, Rāmacandra

who was very much pleased, said to his beloved (i.e. Sītā): "O Jānakī, you are lucky. In the morning you will go, and having seen those ladies with penance as their wealth, (and thus) having made yourself blessed, you will come back near (i.e. to) me."

18-26. Hearing these words of Rāma she was extremely pleased. (She thought): 'In the morning I shall certainly see the female-ascetics.' The spies who were sent to ascertain his fame that was reported (by others) slowly went to him at night. Everyday listening to very charming stories about Rāma, they had that day gone to the large house of a rich man. Seeing a lamp burning and noticing (i.e. hearing) human voices, the spies remained there for a moment, and heard the great glory (of Rāma). There a certain beautiful lady pleased with her child sucking her breasts, said these pleasing words to it: "O son, drink (i.e. suck) as much pleasing milk of me as you like. O my son, later it will be difficult for you to have it. Rāma, shining like the petals of a blue lotus, is the lord of this city. Therefore, the people living in the city will not be reborn. How can there be the drinking (i.e. sucking) of milk in the absence of birth? Therefore, thinking in your mind that the milk is (later) difficult to obtain, drink (suck) it repeatedly. For them also who will remember Śrī Rāma, meditate upon and talk about him, there will certainly be no drinking (i.e. sucking) of (the mother's) milk (i e. they will not be reborn)."

27-38. Hearing these words—the nectar of Rāma's glory, they being delighted went to another house—a great house of a fortunate person. Just then, another spy, thinking that it was a pleasant house, remained there for a moment with a desire to listen to Rāma's glory. There a beautiful lady, chewing tāmbūla, affectionately offered it to her husband, seated on a couch. She, abounding in beauty, fumigated with camphor and agaru (sandal), seeing her husband, and with her eyes moving said with her bangles making a jingling sound to him having the form of Cupid: "O lord, you appear to me like the lord of Raghu (family) having an extremely handsome and very delicate body, a pair of eyes with their corners resembling lotuses, an attractive and expansive chest, and arms with armlets—you are to me actually Rāma." He, handsome like Cupid, having heard these very pleasant words of his wife, dancing (i.e. moving) the corners of his eyes, said: "Listen,

O darling, you, a chaste lady, have spoken very pleasant (words). It is proper for the loyal wives that their husbands are just like Rāma to them; but (see), where am I, the luckless one, and where is that great, fortunate Rāma? (i.e. there is a great disparity between Rāma and me). Where am I, small like an insect, and where (is Rāma) worshipped by gods like Brahmā? Where is the fire-fly, the gem of the sky, and where is the low moth? Where is the lord of beasts (i.e. the lion), the enemy of the elephants, and where is the dull-witted hare? Where is that respectable Gaṅgā, and where is the water on the street flowing the wrong way? Where is Meru, the abode of the gods, and where is a small heap of the guñjā fruits? Similarly, where am I, and where is Rāma, by (the touch of) the dust of whose feet the lady who was reduced to a stone, became in a moment one having the form that enticed (even) Brahmā?"

39-45. With passion produced in her, taken away by love for him, and making her eye-brows like bows dance (i.e. knitting her eye-brows), she embraced her husband who was speaking these words. Hearing words like these, the spy went to another house. Just then another spy heard words full of glory. Some lady making ready all (things) like a bed with flowers (strewn over it), sandal with camphor, fit for love-making, said (these) words to her husband: "O my lord, lie on the bed with flowers (strewn over it) and fit for enjoyment, also have smearing with sandal etc., so also enjoyment in various ways. People like you alone deserve enjoyment, and not those who are averse to Rāma. Enjoy properly everything that is obtained through Rāma's grace. A loving (wife) like me, sandal removing torment, a bed with flowers arranged over it—all (this) is due to Rāma's grace. Those men who will not worship Rāma are deprived of garments, enjoyments etc. and are not able to fill their belly (i.e. to maintain themselves)."

46-51. To the lady who was speaking like this, the husband who was delighted, said: "You are telling the truth; I have everything due to the grace of Rāma." The spy, hearing about Rāma's glory, went (away). Just then a spy, remaining in someone else's house, heard (these) words. A certain lady engaged in playing upon the lute with her husband on the bed, to whom her husband was singing the glory of Rāma, said to her hus-

band: "O lord, we in whose city lord Śrī Rāma himself is the king and protects his subjects like his own sons, are most fortunate. The great feat, difficult to perform, which he performed, is not easy to do: He controlled the ocean and built a bridge over it; he having killed his enemy Rāvaṇa, after having shattered it with (the help of) the monkeys, brought (back) Sītā. Thus he performed a great act."

52-56. Hearing this speech containing very sweet words, the husband smiled, and again said these words to her: "O innocent, beautiful lady, this is not a great feat of Rāmacandra, viz. the killing of Rāvaṇa etc. or controlling the ocean etc. He, the great one, requested by Brahmā etc. easily came (down) to the earth and performed good deeds which remove great sins. Do not look upon Rāma who gives joy to Kauśalyā, as a human being. He who sportively obtained humanhood (i.e. was born as a human being), creates, protects and destroys the world. We are lucky that we see Rāma's lotus-like face which is difficult to be seen by gods like Brahmā."

57-67. He heard the deeds of Rāmacandra, giving delight to the ears. The spy that stood at the door repeatedly heard such words. Another spy having gone to another house stood there to listen to Hari's (i.e. Rāma's) glory. There also he heard the splendid glory of Śrī Rāmabhadra. A very beautiful lady, playing with dice with her husband, as it were causing her bangles to dance, spoke (these) sweet words: "O dear one, I have speedily won everything; what will you, having a mind to win, do (now)?" Saying these words in jest she joyfully embraced her husband. The husband said: "O you of a beautiful body, O you very charming one, I alone have won. I, who always remember Rāma, do not have a defeat anywhere. Remembering Rāma, the charming one, I shall just now vanquish you, as formerly the gods after remembering him, vanquished Diti's sons (i.e. the demons) in a moment." Saying so he turned over the dice. Just then he won; being delighted he said these words: "What I said has come true; I have defeated you, O young lady. One who remembers Rāma has never any fear from one's enemy." Speaking like this they who longed for each other, tightly embraced each other. Then the spy went home. Thus the five great spies, having heard the glory of the king and praising one another gladly went home. One, the

sixth spy, having seen the houses of artisans, went there desiring to hear (about) the glory of the king, the lord of the earth.

68-73. A washerman, with his eyes red due to anger and full of anger kicked his wife who had stayed at another's house, and despised her: "From my house, go to the house of him where you stayed for a day. I shall not accept you who violate my commands." Then his mother said to him: "Do not abandon her who has come (back) to (our) house, who has not committed any fault, and who is free from bad acts." The angry washerman said to his mother: "I am not as great as Rāma as to accept (my wife) who stayed in another's house. Whatever that king does, might by lawful; (but) I will not accept my wife who has stayed in another's house." He again and again said these words: "I am not king Rāma who protected Sītā that had stayed in another's house."

74-79. Having heard these words, the spy was full of anger. He took a sword in his hand and decided to kill him (i.e. the washerman). He (then) recollected Rāma's words: "None of my subjects should be killed." Realising this, he, of a noble mind, wrathfully withdrew (his sword). On hearing (the washerman's words), he was very much afflicted with grief, and being angry and breathing out and in repeatedly (i.e. repeatedly sighing) he went where the five spies stood. They met one another there, and told (one another) the deeds of Rāma honoured by all people without an exception, and heard by them. Having heard his words they told one another: "This censure uttered by a wicked man should not be reported to Raghunātha (i.e. Rāma)." Having thus spoken to one another, the eager ones went (home) and slept, after having mentally decided: 'In the morning, we shall tell the king'.

CHAPTER FIFTYSIX

Rāma Seeks Bharata's Advice

Śeṣa said:

1-9. Having performed the daily morning duties, having duly gratified the brāhmaṇas, the most learned in the Vedas, with presents of gold, he went to the assembly. All men went to the assembly to salute Raghunātha, the king looking after all the subjects like his own sons. Lakṣmaṇa had held an umbrella over the king's head. Bharata and Śatrughna had at that time held the chowries. Sages led by Vasiṣṭha attended there (upon Rāma). Ministers led by Sumantra who did justice, (were present) there. When the time moved on like this, the six well-adorned spies came to salute the king seated in the assembly. Seeing them desirous of speaking, the best king, being eager, entered the interior, private chamber in the assembly. The good-minded king asked all the spies in private: "O spies, O you who restrain your enemies, tell me correctly how people talk about me; how (they talk) about my wife; in what way do they talk about the acts of my ministers?" Hearing these words the spies spoke in a grave tone like that of the (thundering) clouds to the lord of the Raghus who was asking them.

The spies said:

10-17. O lord, now your fame purifies all people in the world. We heard it, being told by men and women in every house. You the Supreme Being, went to the earth to adorn the great family of Vivasvat. You have largely spread your fame. (In that family) many famous and very mighty (kings) were (born) but they did not have that fame as you have. You, the lord, have made blessed all the subjects that do not have an untimely death and trouble from disease. As the moon, or as the river Gaṅgā illumines the earth, your good fame illumines the earth. Having heard (about) your fame, Brahmā and others are very much ashamed. O lord, everywhere your fame now purifies the people. We all who are your spies, O lord, are most blessed, (since) every moment we see your charming face.

Having seen (i.e. heard) these words of the five spies, he asked the sixth one whose face was marked with abashment.

Rāma said:

18-21. O you very intelligent one, tell me truly what you have heard (being talked) in the commingling (i.e. crowd) of people. Tell all that to me as it is. Otherwise you are a sinner.

Again and again, and fast, Rāma asked him in detail. Yet he did not tell Rāma the words of the people (i.e. popular scandal). Then Rāma said to the spy with an abashed face: "I swear you with truth. Tell me everything properly." Then a spy slowly said (these) words to the spy: "You have to tell what was said by the artisans, even if it is not fit to be told."

The spy said:

22-30. O lord, except that your wife stayed in the demon's house, your fame due to your having killed Rāvaṇa has (spread) everywhere. But an artisan—a washerman—despising his wife who had stayed in another's house, beat her at night. His mother said to him: "Why do you beat this innocent one? Accept the woman (i.e. your wife); do not censure her; follow my words (of advice)." Then the washerman said: "I am not king Rāma who accepted Sītā that had stayed in the demon's house." O lord, (the washerman further said:) "Every act done by a king is proper. The act of others, even though they perform meritorious deeds, is improper." Again and again he said: "I am not king Rāma." I got angry. (But) just at that time I remembered your words (viz. 'Do not kill a human being'). (I also thought:) 'Cutting his head I (should) at that time knock him on the ground.' Then I thought: 'Where is Rāma and where is the washerman? (i.e. there is a great disparity between Rāma and the washerman). This wicked one is telling a lie. He is not speaking the truth'. O Rāma, if you order I (shall) kill him now. Due to your persistence, I told you about the analogy, though (really) it should not have been told. The king is the authority here (i.e. in this matter). Let him think (what is relevant).

Śeṣa said:

31-32. Hearing these words which were like the great thunderbolt, (Rāma) heaving and breathing repeatedly fell unconscious. Seeing the king (fallen) unconscious, the spies full of grief fanned him with the end of their garments to remove (Rāma's) grief.

33-40. The king who regained consciousness after some time, said to them: "Go and quickly send Bharata to me." The spies carrying messages and grieved, quickly went to Bharata's house and told (him) Rāma's message. The intelligent Bharata, having heard Rāma's message went to the assembly. Learning that Rāma was in the private (chamber), he quickly came to him, and the noble-minded one said to the door-keeper: "Where is that Rāmabhadra, (that) treasure of kindness, my brother?" The hero went to the house charming with gems, indicated by him. Seeing Rāma tired out, he became afraid in his mind: 'Is this Rāma angry? Or is it the grief of the lord?' Then he said to the king, heaving repeatedly: "O lord, how is that your face which is easily pleased, is hanging (like this)? Your face, due to the tears appears like the moon eclipsed by Rāhu. Tell me the full and true cause. What do (i.e. should) I do for you? O great king, give up your grief. How can you be the receptacle of grief?"

41-46. The righteous hero Rāmacandra, who was thus being spoken to by his brother, spoke to him in a faltering voice: "O brother, listen to my words. (Listen to) the cause of my grief. O very intelligent one, this morning remove it. In the family of Vivasvat no king was (ever) hurt by infamy. My fame today has become foul; Gaṅgā has been joined by Yamunā. The life of those kings only is good on the earth who have fame. The life of those who are wounded by infamy is like (that of) the dead. Those who would have fame on the earth, go to eternal worlds. Those who are bitten by the female serpent in the form of infamy, would go down. Today my fame, the divine river in the world, has become turbid. Listen to the words which the washerman said about me.

47-52. In this city a washerman today uttered certain censurable words about Jānakī (i.e. Sītā). Then, O brother, what

should I do on the earth? Should I abandon myself (i.e. should I commit suicide) today: or should I abandon my wife Jānakī? Which of the two should I do? Tell me what is proper." Speaking like this Rāma, the crest-jewel of Dharma shedding tears and with his body shaken with horripilation, fell on the ground. Seeing his brother fallen, Bharata, full of grief, having examined him carefully, slowly brought Rāma (back) to consciousness. Having seen Rāmacandra who was very much grieved, to have regained consciousness, he spoke very charming words to remove his grief: "Who is this washerman? Which censurable words did he utter? I shall cut off the tongue of him who censures Jānakī."

53-60. Then Rāma told the words that came out of the washerman's mouth (i.e. that were uttered by the washerman) and that were heard by the spy, to the magnanimous Bharata. Hearing them, Bharata said to his brother who was afflicted with grief: "Brahmā said: 'She is pure'. Your father Daśaratha also (said the same thing). (Then) how should she respected by the world, be abandoned merely on (the strength of) the washerman's words? Your fame praised by Brahmā and others, purifies the worlds. How will it be turbid today due to the words of the washerman? Therefore, give up the great grief due to the censure of Sītā. Look after the kingdom along with her—the very fortunate one—who is pregnant. How do you wish to abandon your charming body? Without you who remove our grief, we all are doomed today. That very glorious Sītā will not live without you (even) for a moment. Therefore, with (that) loyal wife enjoy ample glory." Hearing these words of Bharata, the righteous (king), the best among the eloquent, again spoke these words to him:

61-64. "O brother, whatever you say is all just. But by my order, carry out the words which I utter. I know that she is purified in fire, is chaste and is honoured by the world. (But) I am afraid of public scandal. (Therefore) I (shall) abandon my (wife) Jānakī. So, taking in your hand a sharp and very fierce sword, (either) cut off (my) head, or abandon (my) wife Jānakī in the forest." Hearing these words of Rāma, Bharata, with tremor in his body and tears (in his eyes), fell unconscious on the ground.

CHAPTER FIFTYSEVEN

The Washerman's Former Birth

Vātsyāyana said:

1-2. O you of a good vow, tell me how the lord received the utterance of the censure of Jānakī having pure, excellent fame in the world. O Śeṣa, do that by which my mind shall have very splendid happiness, so that I who drink the nectar coming out from your mouth, shall be satisfied, and by which my worldly existence will be cut off.

Śeṣa said:

3-11. In Mithilā, a great city, there lived a king by name Janaka. Pleasing his subjects, he ruled righteously. When that Sīradhvaja (i.e. Janaka) was ploughing the field, an extremely beautiful girl came out from the long, first furrow. Then king Sīraketu (i.e. Janaka) became extremely glad. He named her, the fascinating one, the glory of the world, Sītā. When she, extremely charming, was playing in the grove of the garden, she saw a pair of a male and a female parrot that delighted her mind. The parrots were extremely delighted and lustful, and affectionately talking to each other in pleasant words. That pair, enjoying (each other's company), quickly flew in the sky, settled on the lap of a mountain, and spoke (to each other): "On the earth, charming Rāma will be the king. His wife will be (a woman) by name Sītā. The intelligent, powerful king, vanquishing (his enemies), will rule (over the earth) along with her for eleven thousand years. Blessed is that queen Jānakī, and blessed is he, named Rāma, who having approached each other, will gladly enjoy."

12-16. When the couple of parrots was conversing in this way, Maithilī, observing their words and realising that this was a divine couple and thinking, 'this couple of parrots is telling charming tales about me, (so) I shall catch the couple, and will ask about all the words, the meaning of which is already expressed', she said to her friends: "Slowly catch this charming pair of the birds." The friends just then went to the mountain, and caught the excellent pair of the birds, and with a desire to

do what was dear to their friend (Sītā), reported it to her. Seeing the pair uttering many words in various ways, she comforted it, and said to it these words.

Sītā said:

17-18. Do not be scared. Who are you two, the charming ones? Where have you come from? Who is Rāma, and who is Sītā? Wherefrom did you have the information about them? Tell me all that quickly. Let your fear of me go away.

The pair of birds said:

19-26. There is a very great sage Vālmīki who is the best among those who know dharma. That sage made his disciples sing the future adventures of Rāma. He, engrossed in the well-being of all beings, everyday remembered its words. All those future adventures of Rāma, being sung repeatedly, were heard by both of us; they came to us (i.e. were mastered by us) due to repetition. Listen to them. In the end we shall tell who that Rāma is and who that Jānakī is and what will happen to her with Rāma of a playful nature. Glorious Viṣṇu, good stories about whom are sung by celestial women, will, having divided himself into four, come up at the sacrifice performed by Ṛṣyaśṛṅga. He, having a bow in his hand, will come along with Viśvāmitra and his own brothers to Mithilā. Then there seeing a bow difficult to be taken (i.e. wielded) by other kings, he will break it, and will obtain the very charming daughter of Janaka. O excellent one, we have heard that with her he will rule over a large kingdom. O you of a beautiful body, we who had flown there, heard this and other (things) about you, told by those who lived there. Release us who desire to go.

27-40. Grasping (i.e. hearing) these words very pleasant to the ears, she again spoke (these) words to that pair of birds: "Where would that Rāma be? Whose son (will he be)? In what way will he marry her? What form will the excellent man have? Tell me exactly all this that I have asked you. Later I will do all good things liked by you." Hearing those (words), the female parrot, seeing Jānakī and realising in her heart that she was oppressed by love, then said to her: "There will be an intelligent mighty king having a line of chariots, and the scion

of the solar dynasty, having resorted to whom gods will be fully victorious. He will have three wives, having forms that will fascinate (even) Indra. On them (i.e. from them) four children (sons) lofty on account of might, will be born. Rāma will be the eldest of all. Bharata is said to be (born) after him. After him (i.e. Bharata) Lakṣmaṇa (will be born), and after him (will be born) Śatrughna, powerful everywhere. The large-minded one (i.e. Rāma) will go by the name Raghunātha. They will have endless names; O friend, the face of the powerful Rāma will be charming like the calyx of a lotus. His very long (i.e. large) eyes will have the beauty of lotuses. His nose will be raised, large and charming. His eyebrows will be lovely and charming due to their being harmonious. His lovely hands will be hanging up to his knees. His very small neck will be charming like a conch. His chest will be plain and expansive and charming. His chest will be pure and will have a mark. Endowed with the beauty of charming thighs and waist, he will have a pair of knees, pure and naturally adored. His lotus-like feet will always be worshipped by all his (votaries). The very charming Raghupati (will be like this). Rāma possess a form like this. Who am I to describe him? Even one having a hundred mouths cannot describe him. Then what about birds like me? Seeing his form, (even) Lakṣmī, charming and having a beautiful body, was enticed. (Then) which (lady) is there on the earth that will not be enticed? He has great power, great valour, and has a very enticing form. What power do I have to describe Rāma endowed with all glory and virtues?

41-53. Lucky is that queen Jānakī (i.e. Sītā), having a very attractive form, who will gladly enjoy with him for a myriad years. O beautiful lady, who are you? What is your name that you cleverly and respectfully ask me to narrate (the account) of Rāma?" Hearing these words, Jānakī, telling the couple of birds about the charming and enticing (story of) her birth, said to them: "I am that Jānakī, the daughter of Janaka, whom you mentioned. I shall truly release you when that very charming Rāma comes to me; not otherwise—being (just) allured by your words! I shall caress you. You, having (i.e. speaking) sweet words, stay happily (with me)." Hearing these words they trembled and were frightened. They were mutually (i.e. both)

afraid; (and) said this to Jānakī: "O good lady, we are birds, living in forests and resorting to trees. We wander everywhere. We would not get happiness (merely by staying) at home. I am pregnant. Having gone to my place and having given birth to sons (i.e. young ones) I shall come (back). I have told you the truth." (Though) thus addressed by the female parrot, she did not release her. Then her husband (i.e. the male parrot), eager, and with his face hung down spoke to her: "Sītā, release my wife. How do you keep this my beautiful wife? We shall go to the forest and shall happily move in the forest. My charming wife would be (i.e. is) pregnant. Having performed her (i.e. after her) delivery I shall come to you, O lovely one?" Thus, addressed, she said to him: "O you very intelligent one, you can gladly go. I shall keep this happy one, doing what is dear to me, near me." Thus addressed, the bird was unhappy; and full of tenderness, he said to her: "Those words which are uttered by the meditating saints are true: (The words are:)

54-56. 'One should not speak, one should not speak. One should remain by resorting to silence. Otherwise, due to the blemish in one's utterance, the mad one would be fettered.' Had we not talked (to each other) on this tree, how would we have been bound? Therefore, one should resort to silence." Saying so, he spoke to her: "O beautiful lady, O Sītā, I shall not live without this wife of me. Therefore, O you charming one, leave her."

57-66. Though admonished with various words, she did not release her. The (parrot's) wife, who was angry, and miserable, then cursed Janaka's daughter: "As you are separating me from my husband, in the same way you will be, when pregnant, separated from Rāma." When she, the afflicted one, was repeatedly saying like this, her life departed due to misery, full of the distress of her husband. For her who was repeatedly remembering Rāma and uttering (the name) Rāma, a divine car properly arrived. The female parrot became luminous when she had gone to heaven. When she died, her husband, that lord of birds, was extremely angry, and being distressed, fell into Gaṅgā: "In Rāma's city, full of people, I will be born as (a śūdra so) that due to my words she will be dejected, and extremely unhappy due to separation (from her husband)." Saying so, he who was

distressed, angry, frightened and shaking due to separation from her, fell into the water of Gaṅgā graced with eddies. Due to his being angry, due to his being distressed, and due to his having insulted Sītā, he obtained very (mean) śūdrahood (as he was born as) a washerman named Krodhana. That best bird (or best brāhmaṇa) who, doing ill to the great, abandons his life through anger, obtains śūdrahood after he dies. That took place. Due to the words of the washerman she was censured and separated. On account of the curse of the washerman, she was separated (from Rāma), and she went to the forest.

67. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you what you had asked about (Sītā), born in Videha. Listen to the further account here (i.e. regarding Sītā). I (shall) narrate it.

CHAPTER FIFTYEIGHT

Lakṣmaṇa Leaves Sītā in the Forest

Śeṣa said:

1-8. Seeing Bharata unconscious, Raghunātha who was very much afflicted, said to the door-keepers; "Bring Śatrughna quickly to me." Hearing these words, (the door-keeper), in a moment brought Śatrughna where his brother Rāma remained with Bharata. Seeing Bharata unconscious and Rāma afflicted, he who was grieved, saluted (Rāma) and said: "What has this frightful (incident) come about?" Then Rāma, with his face hung down with a piteous voice and with his words faltering and with tremor, told Śatrughna, the servant of his feet, the words of the śūdra—the popular censure: "O brother, listen, and quickly and carefully do what I tell you, so that my fame will go (i.e. flow) like Gaṅgā on the earth. Having heard the words unequalled in the world, uttered about Sītā by the śūdra, I indeed decided to abandon my body or Jānakī." Hearing these words of Rāma, Śatrughna, the killer of his enemies, being afflicted fell down with a termor on the earth. Having regained consciousness after some time, he said to Raghunātha:

Śatrughna said:

9-13a. O lord, why are these horrible words being talked about Jānakī? Are the sacred texts, censured by the wicked-minded heretics, outcast from all religions, not to be accepted by the brāhmaṇas? Does Gaṅgā that destroys the sins of all the people and that removes calamities, not deserve to be touched by the good, since she is touched by sinful men? In the world the sun rises to give light to the world? What is lost if he is not liked by the owls? Therefore, you (please) accept this (your) wife, (though) censured by a śūdra. O Rāmabhadra, kindly do what I say.

13b-16. Having heard these words of the high-minded Śatrughna he again and again said what he had told Bharata. Hearing those words of his brother, Śatrughna, full of the flood of grief, fell unconscious on the ground like a tree with its roots cut off. Seeing his brother Śatrughna fallen (unconscious), he (i.e. Rāma), being very much afflicted, said these words to the door-keeper: "Bring Lakṣmaṇa near me." He, having gone to Lakṣmaṇa's house, told him these words (i.e. this message).

The door-keeper said:

17-19a. O lord, Rāma has summoned you quickly.

Hearing that summons (made) by Rāma, the sinless one quickly and speedily went where his brother (Rāma) was. Seeing Bharata unconscious, also seeing Śatrughna unconscious, he said (these) words to Śrī Rāmacandra, who was afflicted with grief:

19b-23a. "O king, what is this frightful (scene) like swoon etc. Therefore, O sinless one, tell me the entire main cause." To Lakṣmaṇa who was talking like this and was full of the flood of grief, the king quickly told the entire account from beginning. Hearing those words arising from the deserting of Sītā, he, sighing again and again, had his body as it were stupefied. Seeing his brother with his body stupefied, and repeatedly trembling, and not talking anything, he, afflicted with grief, said:

23b-27a. "Marked with infamy, what shall I do by being (i.e. living) on the earth? I, being afflicted, will abandon, through the fear of the world, this my glorious body. My brothers were always eager to do what I had told them; but, now unfortuna-

tely (for me) they are also doing opposite of what I tell them. Where should I go? Whom should I approach? Kings on the earth will laugh at me marked by infamy, as handsome men laugh at a leper. (When) formerly kings were born in Manu's race, they were born with superior qualities. (But) now when I am born that has become false."

27b-33a. Seeing Rāmabhadra speaking like this, he checked his profuse tears, and spoke in a weakened tone: "O lord, do not be dejected. How is it that you are deprived of your understanding? Who are you, learned one (i.e. How does a learned person like you) to abandon Sītā? I shall call the washerman, and ask him: 'How did you censure that Jānakī, the best among ladies?' In your country no small person is forcibly harassed. Therefore, act towards him as there is the conviction about him in your mind. Why do you (unnecessarily) abandon the timid one who is loyal to her husband (i.e. you)? The daughter of Janaka does not know anyone else (but you) mentally or by speech (i.e. she does not think or talk about anyone else). Therefore, accept her; do not abandon Jānakī. Having shown favour to me, resort to (i.e. do) it quickly."

33b-34. To Lakṣmaṇa who was speaking like this, Rāma, who was overpowered with grief and who was determined to abandon Sītā, advising Lakṣmaṇa with words of righteousness, said to him:

Rāma said:

35-41. How do you tell me: 'Do not abandon her?' Though I know her to be sinless, I am abandoning her due to public censure. For the sake of my fame I shall give up my unhappy body. I shall even forsake you, my brother, (if you are) condemned by public censure. Then how much more about other (member of my) family, sons, friends, and splendid wealth? For the sake of my fame, I shall give up everything, indeed Sītā also. To me my brother, my wife, my kinsmen, are not so dear as my beloved, spotless fame, known in the world. Certainly now the washerman is not to be questioned. In course of time the minds of people will be fully satisfied. A disease, as long as it is unripe (i.e. not properly developed), cannot be diagnosed on the earth, but goes away (i.e. is cured) after it has aggravated by means of

medicine. Similarly this will take place (i.e. people will be satisfied) in course of time. Now do not delay. Leave this chaste lady in a forest, or kill me with a sword.

42-44. Hearing these words uttered (by Rāma), the great one was pained. Lakṣmaṇa, overpowered with grief, thought in his mind (i.e. to himself): 'Jamadagni's son (Paraśurāma), killed even his mother by the order of his father. The order of an elderly person, whether it is proper or improper, is not at all to be disobeyed. Therefore, with a desire to do what is dear to Rāma, I shall leave her (in the forest).' Thinking like this in his mind (i.e. to himself), he said to his brother:

Lakṣmaṇa said:

45-47. What ought not to be done should even be done. An elderly person's order should not be violated (i.e. disobeyed). Therefore, I shall carry out your words that you speak to me, O you of a good vow.

To Lakṣmaṇa, who was speaking like this, he said: "Good, good, O very intelligent one, you have pleased my mind. Tonight only, under the pretext of (fulfilling) Sītā's cherished wish to see the female ascetics, put her into a chariot and leave her in the great forest."

48-54. Hearing these words, he, with his mouth fully parched, weeping, shedding tears, went to his own house. Having called Sumantra, he said these words to him: "Make ready my chariot, adorned with good horses." He, having heard these words, then brought the chariot. Seeing the chariot that was brought Lakṣmaṇa overpowered with grief, was very much distressed; and he, the servant of his brother (Rāma), got into the excellent chariot, and sighing, went to Sītā's abode, and having gone into the harem and heaving and full of grief, said (these) words to the daughter of Mithilā: "O mother Sītā, Rāma has sent me to you. To fulfil your cherished wish you (can) go the female ascetics." Having heard these words of (i.e. spoken by) Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā who was very much delighted, said to Lakṣmaṇa:

Jānakī said:

55-63. I, Maithilī, who remember Rāma's feet and to fulfil whose cherished wish he sent Lakṣmaṇa, am blessed. Today I shall salute the female ascetics living in the forest, and looking upon their husbands as deities I shall honour the charming ones with (presents of) garments.

Saying so, Raghunātha's wife (Sītā), in order to do what was dear to her, took (with her) charming garments, costly ornaments, gems, spotless pearls, camphor etc. having fragrance, so also various things like sandal in thousands. Repeatedly accepting these (things) from the hands of the female servants and then going to Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā tumbled at the threshold. Not minding it through curiosity, she said to Lakṣmaṇa who did good to her: "Where is the chariot in which you will take me (to the forest)?" Heaving he along with Sītā got into the golden chariot. He said to Sumantra: "Drive the horses having the speed of mind." At the words of Lakṣmaṇa he looking at Lakṣmaṇa's face full of tears called the chariot, well-yoked (with horses). The horses, struck by kim with a whip, fell on the path. When the horses did not move, he said to Lakṣmaṇa:

Sumantra said:

64-78. O lord, though driven with effort, the horses do not move. What should I do? I do not realise the cause of their fall.

To him who was speaking like this, Lakṣmaṇa said in a faltering voice after mustering courage to the charioteer: "Strike these with whips etc." Hearing these words, the charioteer somehow drove them. Then Sītā's right eye, indicating trouble, throbbed. Just then in her heart grief, indicating misfortune, was produced. Just then only, auspicious birds turned round. Seeing these, Sītā said to her brother-in-law: "How is it that I have a desire to go to see the female ascetics. May well-being come to Rāma; so also to his younger brother, Bharata; so also to his subjects everywhere. Let misfortunes not come to them." That Lakṣmaṇa with his throat chocked and full of tears, did not say anything to Sītā who was speaking like this. She (while) going saw deer turning to the left and causing multitudes of miseries.

She said (to Lakṣmaṇa): "It is laid down that since today the deer are turning to the left, it is not proper that I am going after abandoning Rāma's feet. The highest duty of women is to serve their husbands' feet. So, whatever would happen to me who am going after leaving him, (must be said) to be proper only." When the queen (Sītā) was thinking like this on the way, she actually saw Gaṅgā which was resorted to by groups of sages only, in which waves of water resembling milk were seen, in which waves having the form of a staircase to heaven were seen. By the touch of the drops of her water the heap of great sins not finding any place all around, runs away. Having reached Gaṅgā, Lakṣmaṇa shedding tears said to Sītā, seated in the chariot: "Sītā, come down to the ground from the chariot." Having heard his words Sītā with her arms held by him, in a moment got down and on the way tumbled on thorns.

CHAPTER FIFTYNINE

The Birth of Kuśa and Lava

Śeṣa said:

1-8. Then Lakṣmaṇa, having made Sītā cross Gaṅgā in a boat to the other bank, took her by hand and went to the forest. On the way she who was marked with her face parched up, walked. Her good (i.e. delicate) feet were hurt with thorns. She tumbled at every step. At that time Lakṣmaṇa carrying out the order of Rāghava took her into the very fearful forest causing misery, in which there were fierce dense trees like barbula, khadira, śleṣmātaka, ciñciṇīka, which were dry due to wild fire. Serpents living in the hollows of trees and getting very angry, hissed. Owls causing fear to the minds of people, cried. (In the forest) artless, very wrathful, tigers, lions, foxes, and elephants, eaters of human beings were noticed. Buffaloes, hogs which were wicked, which were marked with two fangs, afflicted the minds of beings. Sītā seeing such a forest suffered from grief through fear. With her feet pricked by thorns she said (these) words to Lakṣmaṇa.

Jānakī said:

9-12. O hero, I do not see (here) hermitages resorted to by sages and giving joy to the eyes. Nor do I see their wives having a great treasure of penance. I am only seeing fearful birds and dry trees. This entire forest is being burnt by wild fire. I notice you too with your eyes full of tears. At every step I am experiencing a thousand ill omens. Therefore, O best hero, tell me whether I of a wicked heart, am abandoned by the noble Rāma. Tell it to me quickly.

13-18. Hearing these words, Lakṣmaṇa, overpowered with grief, and with tears (flowing) on his face checked, then said nothing. She, afflicted with grief and moving with Lakṣmaṇa in that forest only looked at his face and again spoke to that hero; yet, he, desiring to see something, did not say anything to her. Then, (when) she asked him, she very much insisted (on getting a reply). When Lakṣmaṇa was asked by Sītā persistently, he with his throat choked and repeatedly repenting, told her the reason why she was deserted. Hearing those words like (the fall of) the thunderbolt, she, (though) free from any disease, became like a good creeper with its roots cut off. Just then the Earth did not take (back) this daughter (i.e. Sītā) of her, since she believed that Rāma would not abandon sinless Sītā.

19-24. Seeing Sītā fallen down, Lakṣmaṇa, eager (to revive her) revived her by means of breezes produced by (the movements of) the tips of sprouts. Having regained consciousness, she said, "O brother-in-law, do not joke. How does the descendant of Raghu abandon me who am sinless?" Having thus moaned much, she, having seen Lakṣmaṇa full of grief, being fully distressed, fell unconscious on the ground. Having regained consciousness after a while, she full of grief and hurt by sorrow, (and) remembering Rāma's feet, said: "How does that very intelligent, great Raghunātha who along with the monkeys restrained the ocean for my sake, abandon me? How will that great hero abandon me by (relying) upon the words of the washerman? Now, my destiny is unfavourable."

25-32. Saying so the daughter of the Videha(-king) again swooned. Seeing her unconscious he wept in a tone affected by emotion. Having regained consciousness she who was very much

distressed, looked at Lakṣmaṇa who was afflicted with grief and whose throat was choked, and said to him: "O Lakṣmaṇa, go to Rāma, the (very) image of Dharma and the treasure of glory, and tell him these my words in the presence of the treasure of penance: 'Even knowing me to be sinless, you abandoned me. Does it behove your family, or is it the fruit of your knowledge of the sacred texts? You abandoned me who was always attached to your feet, who always ate what was left over by you. For all that my destiny is the cause (i.e. is responsible). O best among excellent warriors, may you have welfare everywhere. Remembering you mentally, in deeds and speech, I shall just hold my breath (i.e. live) in the forest. All others were mentally abandoned by me, O you born in the family of Raghu. O lord of the earth, you alone should be my husband in every birth: I who remember your feet, have all my sins destroyed and have become the best chaste lady.'

33-39. O best of the Raghus, convey all my message to my mothers-in-law. 'I (though) sinless, have been abandoned in the very fierce forest. I remember your feet in the forest, full of herds of deer. The very noble Rāma abandoned me (though) pregnant in the forest.' O Lakṣmaṇa, listen to my words. May well-being come to you. Now preserving well Rāma's semen (in my womb), I would give up my life. As you are proving true Rāma's words, you will have prosperity. One serving the lotus-like feet of Rāma, and depending upon another, has to do it. I should be favoured, and be remembered at times." Saying so, she fell unconscious on the ground in front (of Lakṣmaṇa). Seeing Jānakī unconscious, Lakṣmaṇa became afflicted. Saumitri (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa) fanned her with the ends of his garment, and having saluted her who had regained consciousness, he repeatedly consoled her with sweet words.

Lakṣmaṇa said:

40-43a. This I (i.e. I Just) go to Rāma; and will tell him everything. Near you, there is the great hermitage of the sage Vālmīki.

Speaking thus to her, he being afflicted and full of tears, turned round, and shedding tears, sorrowfully went to king

Rāma. Seeing her brother-in-law going, Jānakī with amazed eyes (said): "This my noble brother-in-law is joking. How (is it that) Rāghava abandoned me who was dearer to Rāma than his own life!"

43b-50. Thinking like this, she looked at him with unwinking eyes. Realising on his having crossed Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā) that her desertion by Rāma was a fact, she fell down, was in a very great peril, and fainted. At that time swans brought water from all places and sprinkled (it over her). Sweet fragrant breezes blew. Elephants with the tips of their tongues full of (i.e. wet with) water, washed as it were, her body covered with dust. Deer came near her with their eyes full of wonder. At that time, trees were full of flowers, without the spring (i.e though it was not the spring season). When this was the time (i.e. when so much time passed), the chaste lady regained consciousness and being very much afflicted with grief, and saying 'Rāma, Rāma', moaned. "O lord, O friend of the poor, O good treasure full of pity, how do you abandon me in the forest without my fault?" She talked like this; she wept again and again. She looked here and there: and she again and again became unconscious.

51-55a. At that time revered Vālmīki had come to the forest. At that time he heard weeping with piteous words. He then said to his disciples: "Find out from the interior of the forest who is weeping in a distressed tone in the forest." Ordered by the sage, they went to the place where Jānakī saying 'Rāma, Rāma' and full of a flood of tears, was sitting. Seeing that they eagerly came back to the sage Vālmīki. Having heard the words uttered by them, the sage then went (there). Seeing that heap of penance (i.e. Vālmīki), Jānakī who looked upon her husband as a deity, (said):

55b-58. "My salution to the sage, the image of the Vedas, the ocean of religious acts of austerity." He greeted that Sītā who was saying like this with blessings. "Live long with your husband; obtain two bright sons. Who are you? Why have you come to the fearful forest? Why are you like this? Tell me everything, I would (like to) know the cause of your sorrow." Heaving and with tremor produced in her body, Rāma's wife then spoke with piteous words to the sage:

59-63. "Listen to my significant words—the cause of all my sorrow. Know me to be the servant of king Raghunātha. I have been abandoned without a fault. I do not know the reason for that. By Rāma's order Lakṣmaṇa left me here and went (back)." Vālmīki, consoling Sītā having lotus-like eyes and lotus-like face full of tears, and who had said like this, spoke to Sītā: "Know me to be the sage Vālmīki who is your father's preceptor. O Vaidehī, do not be afflicted, come to my hermitage. O you who look upon your husband as a deity, suppose that your father's house is (situated) at a different place. In such an act (i.e. when such an act is done), let me be angry with the king (i.e. Rāma) (i.e. I would be angry with Rāma, and not with you)."

64. Hearing words like these, Jānakī who looked upon her husband as a deity, who was full of affliction, and whose face was full of tears, was a little happy."

Śeṣa said:

65-68. Having consoled her whose eyes were full with the flood of grief, Vālmīki took her to his auspicious hermitage full of the groups of female ascetics. She, going after Vālmīki, the treasure of penance, shone like a charming star going after the moon. Having reached his hermitage full of sages, Vālmīki told the female ascetics about Jānakī who had come to his hermitage. Vaidehī, of a noble mind, saluted all the female ascetics. Being very much delighted, they embraced one another.

69-72. That treasure of penance, Vālmīki, said to his disciples: "Construct a beautiful hut of leaves for Jānakī." Hearing these very pleasant words of Vālmīki, they constructed an attractive hut with leaves and (pieces of) wood. Waiting upon Vālmīki and eating (i.e. subsisting upon) fruits, Vaidehī, a chaste wife, lived in it. Jānakī who looked upon her husband as a deity muttering 'Rāma, Rāma', (both) mentally and in words, passed her days there.

73-80a. At (the proper) time Jānakī gave birth to two sons, having charming bodies, and having the likeness of Rāma and like (the two) Aśvins. Hearing about the birth of the two sons of Jānakī, the sage was delighted; he who knew the sacred prayers, performed the purificatory rites like the ceremony performed at the time of the birth of a child. Vālmīki performed (these)

rites with darbhas and the hair of a cow's tail. So the two sons have well-known names Kuśa and Lava. Vālmīki also performed the auspicious rites where she free from menstrual excretion (i.e. who had given birth to a child) remained, in such a way that she having lotus-like eyes, was very much delighted in her heart. The same day, Śatrughna, with a few soldiers, had, after killing Lavaṇa, come to Vālmīki's pleasant hermitage at night. At that time Vālmīki had directed Śatrughna: "Do not tell Rāma about Jānakī's sons. I shall (later) tell it (to him)." The attractive sons of Jānakī grew there (i.e. in Vālmīki's hermitage). Vālmīki brought up the two joyful excellent (boys) with bulbs, roots and fruits. The two, very charming like the moon of the first day of the bright half (of a month), were purified (with rites) in due course.

80b-86. The two charming ones were initiated into sacred study (by Vālmīki). Having initiated them into sacred study, the sage taught the two boys the Vedas with their six limbs. He taught them the science of archery with its secrets and Rāmāyaṇa. Vālmīki gave them two bows well adorned with gold; (the bows were) unbreakable, had strings, and were best in warding off the groups of enemies. (He gave them) two inexhaustible quivers full of arrows, and two swords. He (also) gave to Jānakī's two sons, shields that could not be pierced through. The two archers who had mastered the Vedas, gladly moving in the hermitage, shone like the two bright Aśvins. Seeing (her) two excellent sons holding swords and shields, Jānakī was very much delighted and gave up (the grief) due to her desertion (by Rāma). O brāhmaṇa, I have told you this account of the birth of Jānakī's sons. Hereafter listen to the cutting off of the arms of the soldiers that took place.

CHAPTER SIXTY

Lava Defeats the Army and Kills the General

Śeṣa said:

1-4. Seeing his soldiers with their arms cut off, Śatrughna getting very angry and biting his lower lip with anger, said to them: "O you, which hero has cut off your arms? I shall cut off both the arms of him, (even though he is) protected by gods, O soldiers. The great fool does not know (anything about) the great might of Rāmacandra. Now through my valour I shall show (him) my might. Where is that hero? Where is the charming hero? Which fool, not knowing the valour, would seize sleeping serpents?" When the heroes were told (like this) they were amazed and much afflicted.

5-10a. They told (him) about the child that had the likeness of Rāmacandra. He on hearing the seizure of the horse by the boy, had his eyes red due to anger and willing to fight he ordered his general Kālajit: "O general, by my order array the entire army. We have to encounter a very mighty and brave enemy. This is not a child who has seized the horse. He might be Viṣṇu or he might be Śiva. My horse could not have been taken away in any other way. Certainly a great destruction of the mighty army will take place. The boy with a fearless mind, is playing (doing) acts according to his own will. We difficult to be conquered by our enemies, should get ready and go there."

10b-14a. Hearing these words of Śatrughna, that general of the army made ready that army which was arranged in(such) a way that it would be hard (for the enemy to dislodge it) and which had four divisions. Śatrughna, having seen that excellent (complete) army with four divisions made ready, ordered it to go to that place where the boy who had seized the horse, stood. Then the army moved with the four divisions causing that part of the earth to quake and scaring by its might the enemies. The generl saw that boy having a form (like that) of Rāma. Thinking (i.e. finding) him to be the likeness of Rāma, he spoke to him beneficial words:

14b-21a. "O boy, leave the best horse of the powerful

Rāma. I am the ferocious general, named Kālajit, of the king. Seeing you resembling Rāma, pity is produced in my heart. Otherwise, you will not live due to the suffering caused by me." Having heard these words of the warrior of Śatrughna (i.e. of Kālajit), the boy laughed a little, and with a little wrath said (these) wonderful words: "Go, you are free; report to that Rāma the seizure of the horse. O brave one, I am not afraid of you by means of (i.e. though you have uttered) words of political wisdom. I do not care (even) if crores like you (encounter me). Due to the grace of my mother's feet, they are to me (as light) as cotton. That your name which your beautiful mother gave to you, is only due to complexion and not due to valour, like the ripe bimba fruit (having red colour but no efficacy). Now, characterised by (i.e. on) the strength of your name (Kālajit), show me your valour. You will prove your name to be true vanquishing me who am your death."

Śeṣa said:

21b- 25a. He, the crest (i.e. the best) of excellent warriors, disturbed by the words like thunderbolt, got very angry in his mind, and again said (these) words: "O boy, in which family are you born? What is your name? I do not know your name, so also your family and your virtue. How can I, being in a chariot, conquer you who go on foot (i.e. are a foot-soldier), by following the prescribed course of conduct?" Then, he got very angry, and again said these words: "O warrior, what is the use of (your knowing) my family, my virtue, or my name? I am Lava and will in a moment vanquish all the soldiers of my enemy. Now I shall even make a warrior like you (seated in a chariot) go on foot (i.e. a foot-soldier)."

25b-33. Speaking like this, that mighty Lava made ready his bow; he made the twang-sound (of the bow) and scared the soldiers at heart. Having recollected Vālmīki first and (then) his mother Jānakī, Lava discharged sharp arrows which instantly took away the life (of his enemies). Kālajit who was angry, made his bow ready and he who was quick and proficient in fighting, struck Lava. The younger brother of Kuśa (i.e. Lava) in a moment quickly cut off his arrows into hundred (pieces) and deprived the general of his chariot by means of bright, excellent

arrows. He who was deprived of his chariot, mounted upon an intoxicated, very speedy elephant which (i.e. whose ichor) was flowing in seven ways (i.e. streams) and which was brought by his soldiers. The victor (i.e. Lava), seeing him mounted upon an elephant, laughed, and pierced all the hosts of the enemies with ten arrows fixed on his bow. Kālajit, seeing his valour, and with his mind amazed, threw (at him) a big mace made of great (i.e. strong) iron. (Lava), the younger brother of Kuśa, seeing the mace, made with (i.e. weighing) a myriad of bhāras coming to him speedily, cut it off quickly into three pieces with arrows having sharp, horse-shoe-shaped heads.

34-40. He then discharged (at Lava) a sharp, fierce iron club, out to take away his life. Lava, full of speed, cut it off. Having cut off the fierce iron club, he, with his eyes red due to anger, observing him to have mounted upon the haunch of an elephant, became angry. At that moment (only) he cut off with his sword the trunk of that elephant. Supporting his feet with (i.e. standing on) the tusks of the elephant, he mounted on his head. Having cut off the general's crown into a hundred pieces, and his armour into a hundred pieces, and having dragged the general with (i.e. by seizing) his hair he knocked him down on the ground. The general knocked down from the haunch of the elephant, again got angry. He struck him on his chest with his thunderbolt-like fist; he, struck with fists, having bent his bow, quickly discharged arrows with sharp horse-shoe-shaped arrows at his chest. He who had bent his bow and who had put on a helmet and an armour unbreakable even by crores of arrows, shone on the battlefield. He pierced by sharp arrows, took a sword to kill him.

41-48a. Lava, gnawing his teeth through anger, and repeatedly heaving and breathing, cut off the centre of the arm of the general who was coming with a sword in his hand. He, with the sword in his hand fell down. The general, seeing that his (right) hand holding the sword was cut off, angrily went to strike him with a mace (held) with the left (hand). That arm of him along with the armlets was also cut off with sharp arrows. Then the hero, getting extremely angry struck Lava with his feet. Lava, (though) struck by his feet, did not move on the battlefield. He bore up the cutting off of the feet

like an elephant struck with a garland. Even then he started striking him with his head. Then Lava, looking upon the general as having superior valour, took a sword resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world in his hand, and cut off his head adorned with a large crown. When the general was struck down, there was a great wailing. The angry soldiers came (forward) to kill Lava.

48b-57a. By striking them with his arrows, Lava made them intent on fleeing. Some were broken; some were pierced; some went (away) from the battlefield. Having warded off all soldiers, he gladly penetrated the army, as the hog, having heaved, plunges into the great ocean at the time of the deluge. The elephants were pierced and cut into two, and the earth was filled with pearls, and became inaccessible for the great warriors (when) it is covered with mountains. Horses, shining with power, having golden saddles, charming, and decorated with gems, fell into the pool wet (i.e. full) with blood. The warriors fighting from chariots, who looked lovely on account of the bows in their hands, fell into the interior of the chariots like gods going to heaven. Warriors skilled in fighting, who bit their lips, marked with charm revolving round their faces, were seen to have fallen there. A river of blood, with the tortoises in the form of horses' heads and charming due to its great stream and causing fear to the enemies, flew (there). The arms of some were cut off; the feet of some were chopped off. The ears and noses and armours and earrings of some were cut off. When the general fell in the battle, such (was the) destruction (that) took place. All heroes fell down. None survived then.

57b-67. Lava, having got victory in the battle and having vanquished the host of his enemies, thinking that someone else might come, looked (everywhere). Some who were spared from the battle, did not die on the battlefield. They went near Śatrughna to tell him (about) the wonderful account. Having gone (to him), they told him (the account) as it took place on the battlefield—the death of Kālajit from (i.e. at the hands of) the boy, and his wonderful effort in the battle. Hearing that, Śatrughna who was amazed, laughed, and remembering the seizure of the horse by the boy, gnawed his teeth in anger, and said to them: "O heroes, were you intoxicated, or were you cheating

imps? How did incompetency overcome you? How did Kālajit die? How would a boy vanquish him who was fearful to the hosts of enemies in the battle, who was (always) victorious in a battle, and who was invincible even for Yama?" Hearing the words of Śatrughna, the warriors, wet with blood, said: "We were not under the influence of intoxication etc. There was no fraud, nor gambling. O king, know that Kālajit had his death from (i.e. at the hands of) Lava. The boy having matchless skill, shook the entire army. (Now you decide) what is to be done hereafter, or which excellent men should be sent (against Lava). Thinking him to be a child, you should not use your force rashly." Then Śatrughna, having heard these words of the warriors, spoke to Sumati, the best intellect, about the waging of the war.

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

Hanūmat Falls Unconscious

Śatrughna said:

1. O great minister, do you know who is the boy that took away the horse and who destroyed all my army like an ocean?

Sumati said:

3-5. O lord, this is the great hermitage of the best sage Vālmīki. O you who torment your enemies, kṣatriyas do not at all live here. It might be that Indra became (i.e. took the form of) the great sage and snatched the horse, or it might be Śiva. Otherwise, who else would take away your horse? O great king, who else but Puṣkala can go to (i.e. march against) him who killed the very fearful Kālajit? O you destroyer of your enemies, go there surrounded by all your brave warriors, kings, and your great army.

6-8. Having gone there, having bound the hero, I shall show it to Rāma, who has a curiosity. This is my careful (i.e. well-considered) view.

Hearing these words, he ordered all his warriors: "Go with a great army. I (shall) come after you." In a moment the soldiers went there where the mighty one (i.e. Lava), stretching his very strong bow furnished with a string, stood.

9-11. Having seen that very mighty army full of warriors, coming, the powerful Lava was not at all afraid in his mind. Lava, looking upon all the warriors as deer, angrily stretched his bow, and discharging arrows in thousands, stood up like a lion. They, being afflicted by the arrows, and full of great anger, looking upon the hero as a boy, then rushed to him.

12-14. Seeing thousands of warriors arrayed in a circular arrangement of the troops, Lava, full of anger, quickly fixed arrows (on his bow). The first circular arrangement had a thousand (soldiers). The second had ten thousand as the number (of soldiers). The third had twenty thousand; the fourth had fifty thousand; the fifth had a lakh of soldiers; the sixth had ten thousand more; and the seventh had a couple of lakhs. He was surrounded by seven (such) circular arrangements of the troops.

15-16. In the midst was Lava, surrounded by the circular arrangements of the troops; and moving like fire he burnt (i.e. destroyed) all the soldiers forming the circular arrangements. The noble one destroyed all the arrangement(s)—some with swords, some with arrows, some with barbed missiles, some with lances, (some) with spears having sharp edges, and some with clubs tipped with iron.

17-21. The younger brother of Kuśa, freed from the seven circular arrangements of the troops, shone like the moon freed from the group of clouds at the advent of the autumn. He with his disc cut off many trunks of elephants and mighty heads of warriors, and completely struck (down) the warriors. Afflicted by Lava's arrows many fell and fainted on the battlefield; others, very timid, fled away. Seeing the army afflicted by Lava's arrows, intent on fleeing, the hero named Puṣkala went to the battlefield to fight. The mighty one, seated in his chariot, charming due to good horse, saying, 'Wait, wait' and with his eyes full of anger, went to (i.e. marched against) Lava.

22-23a. That Puṣkala knowing the (use of) great missiles, said to Lava: "Stand in the chariot adorned with good horses in

the battle. How shall I fight with you—a foot-soldier—in the battle? Therefore, stand in the chariot, and then I shall fight with you."

23b-26. Hearing these words, Lava said to Puṣkala: "If I standing in your chariot, fight in the battle, then my victory would be doubtful. O hero, we are not brāhmaṇas given to receiving (gifts), but we are kṣatriyas, always engaged in acts of charity. Now, through anger I shall break your chariot. Then you will (also) be fighting on foot. Then you will fight (with me)."

27-29. Puṣkala having heard these words full of righteousness and courage, was amazed in heart for a long time and made ready his bow. Lava seeing him having taken a bow, got angry and cut off the bow in his hand, and took an aim with his arrow. The powerful one, laughed and being excited broke his chariot in the battlefield, while he was stringing his bow.

30-35. Seeing his chariot broken and his bow cut off by the noble one, he regarded him as a great hero, and the fighter on foot ran away in the battlefield. Both heroes were heroes; both had raised their arrows; both were wet with blood; both had their armours cut off. Both were seen to have their bodies shattered with the strokes of arrows of each other; both desired victory; both desired to kill each other like Jayanta and Kārtikeya or Śiva and Indra. In this way they fought with each other on the battlefield. Puṣkala said to the boy: "O crest-jewel of the brave, I have not seen a crest-jewel (i.e. best) of the brave like you. Today I shall knock down your head with arrows having sharp, fine joints. Do not run from the battlefield. Being restrained, protect your life."

36-39. Saying so he put brave Lava in the cage of (i.e. formed by) arrows. Puṣkala's arrows settled on the ground after having pervaded the sky. Lava, being in the cage of (i.e. formed by) arrows, said to Puṣkala: "O hero, you have done a great feat that you harassed me with arrows". Saying so, the hero skilled in taking aim with an arrow and cutting off the volley of arrows, said to Puṣkala: "Take care of yourself (while) standing in the battle. Afflicted by the strokes of my arrows, you will fall covered with blood, on the earth."

40-45. Having heard these words, Puṣkala, full of anger, fought with the very strong hero in the battle. Lava, getting angry in a moment angrily took out a sharp arrow (capable of) killing the enemy and resembling a serpent from the quiver. That blazing arrow discharged from Lava's bow and ready to pierce his chest was quickly cut off by Bharata's son (Puṣkala). When Bharata's son cut off with his fatal arrow (the arrow of Lava), he got very angry and took another fierce arrow. The sharp arrow discharged from the bow drawn up to the ear, pierced the chest of that Puṣkala in the great battle. The crest-jewel of the very brave, pierced in the chest by that fast going arrow, fell on the ground.

46-54. Seeing Puṣkala fallen, the son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat) took him who was unconscious and handed him over to (Śatrughna) brother of Rāghava. Seeing him unconscious, he, with his mind overcome with grief and full of anger, ordered Hanūmat to kill Lava. Hanūmat, burning with rage, uprooted a śālmali tree and quickly went (i.e. rushed) to vanquish in the battle the very powerful Lava. The mighty Hanūmat struck on Lava's head with the tree. Lava, seeing it falling upon (him), quickly cut it off into hundred (pieces). When the tree was cut off, the very mighty one again angrily uprooted trees from the root and struck them on his chest and head. The mighty one speedily cut off with his arrows of sharp joints those trees which Wind's son (i.e. Hanūmat) took, and with which he struck him. Then the monkey, Wind's son, having uprooted rocks like high rocks thrown down by an earthquake, speedily threw them on the head (of Lava). Struck by those multitudes of rocks in the battle, he raised his bow and powdered them with his arrows as particles with turners' wheels.

55-62. Then, in the battle the angry blessed Hanūmat encircled the mighty Lava with his tail. Seeing himself tied up with his tail, he the powerful one, remembering his mother in his heart, struck with his fist Hanūmat's tail. Distressed by the strokes of the fist, Hanūmat freed him. He the powerful one, freed from the tail, discharged arrows in the battle. The monkey with his body afflicted by the unavoidable strokes of arrows, looking upon the shower of arrows as very unbearable thought: 'What should we do here? If I run away then it is

shameful for my lord; (If I stay here), the boy would strike me. Due to the boon given to me by Brahmadatta, I had neither a swoon, nor did I die. The affliction caused by the arrows is unbearable. Let Śatrughna go to (i.e. march against) Lava in the battle and get victory over the boy. I desiring victory, shall lie in false swoon!' Thinking like this in his mind, he fell on the battlefield, fraudulently unconscious when all the heroes were seeing (i.e. in the presence of all the heroes). He, skilled in discharging arrows, knowing that the very mighty Hanūmat was unconscious, struck all the kings (with arrows).

CHAPTER SIXTYTWO

Lava Becomes Unconscious

Śeṣa said:

1-14. Hearing that Hanūmat was unconscious, Śatrughna was distressed: 'What should I do in the battle? This boy is very powerful.' Himself seated in a golden chariot along with excellent heroes he went where Lava, skilled in fighting in a wonderful way, stood. He saw Lava, as if Rāma reduced to childhood had come on the earth, having a bow and arrows in his hand and discharging (arrows) in the battle. At that time he thought: 'Who is this having Rāma's form and having a charming body dark like the petals of a blue lotus? This must be the son of (Sītā) the daughter of (the king of) Videha; not otherwise (i.e. none else), (who) having vanquished us in the battle, will go like the lord of beasts. There is no possibility of the victory of us who are void of power. What shall we, (though) proficient in fighting, (yet) being weak, do?' He, having thought like this, said (these) words to the boy who fought with vehemence, knocking down crores of heroes: "O boy, who are you that are knocking down our heroes on the ground? You do not know the power of Rāma who killed the demons. Who is your mother? Who is your father? Being very lucky, you got victory. O you very mighty one, what is your name well-known in the world? Release

(the horse); how (i.e. why) have you caught the horse? (Since it is) due to your being a child, I forgive you. Come, see Rāma, he will give you large (wealth)." The boy who was addressed like this, said (these) words to Śatrughna: "What have you to do with my name, or my father, or my family, or my age? O hero, if you are endowed with power, then fight (with me) in the battle; otherwise, salute the hero Kuśa (by falling) at his feet; otherwise you cannot go. You are the brave brother of Rāma; (but) for us you are not the best among the mighty. If you have power, then forcibly release the horse." Saying so, the mighty warrior, taking aim with his arrow, struck him on his chest, head and arms on the battlefield.

15-27. Then the king (Śatrughna) got angry, and making a grave sound like that of the clouds, and as it were scaring the boy (i.e. in order to scare the boy) made his bow ready. The best among the mighty discharged innumerable arrows. The boy powerfully cut off all those volleys of arrows. The surface of the earth was pervaded by the arrows discharged by Lava in many ways. They became inexhaustible (i.e. did not fail) like gifts given on a day of a great portentous calamity. Those arrows fixed (on his bow) by Lava pervaded the entire sky. Having reached the sun's orb, they proceeded uninterruptedly everywhere. Even the wind did (i.e. could) not enter the cage of his arrows. Then what can be said about human beings said to live for a moment? Seeing these arrows spreading on, Śatrughna was amazed. Skilled in discharging arrows he cut off a hundred thousand (arrows). Seeing all his arrows cut off, the younger brother of Kuśa (i.e. Lava) quickly cut off the bow of king Śatrughna. When, having taken another bow, he discharged his arrows, he shattered the chariot with arrows having sharp joints. He cut off, the very strong bow in his hand, that had a string. The heroes remaining on the battlefield, appreciated that feat. He, with his bow cut off, deprived of his chariot, with his horses killed, with his charioteer killed, resorted to another chariot, went to fight forcibly with Lava. Pierced with many arrows, with blood flowing from his body, he shone in the battle like a kiṁśuka tree with flowers. Struck by the arrows of Śatrughna, he, skilled in aiming with an arrow, and having bent his bow became very angry. He made Śatrughna's body such that its

armour was shattered, that the head was bereft of the crown and wet with the flowing blood.

28-38. Then Rāma's younger brother (Śatrughna) got angry; and he who was extremely angry discharged ten fatal arrows having sharp tips. Having reduced them to very small pieces like the sesamum seeds with his arrows having sharp joints, he struck on Śatrughna's chest with eight arrows. Very much afflicted with (the strokes of) the arrows and thinking of the mighty Lava and regarding him to be invincible, he discharged arrows at that time. Then Lava pierced him in his large chest with an arrow resembling the crescent moon and looking charming in the joints. Pierced in the chest, he received a terrible affliction. He, having a bow in his hands and well-adorned, fell into the interior of the chariot. Seeing Śatrughna unconscious, Suratha and other kings, eager to get victory in the battle ran to Lava. Suratha, the brave Vimala, so also king Vīramaṇi, Sumada, Riputāpa and others surrounded him in the battle. Certain kings struck him all round with arrows having sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads, pestles; some with very fierce arrows; some with darts and hatchets. The crest-jewel among the fighting heroes, seeing them eager to fight unjustly, struck them (each) with ten arrows in the battle. They, struck with showers of arrows in the battle, were very angry. Some fled away and some fainted on the battlefield. Just then, king Śatrughna, full of might, gave up his unconsciousness (i.e. regained consciousness) and went to fight with the great warrior Lava.

39-47. Having come (to him), he said to that Lava: "You who are like a boy, are lucky. You are not a boy; you are a god; you have come to outwit (us). I was never vanquished by any hero in battle. You have made me unconscious, when I am seeing (i.e. under my very nose). Now see my valour. I shall knock you down in the battle; put up with (at least) one arrow; O boy, do not run away." Saying so, he who had destroyed Lavaṇa, fierce like Yama's face, took an arrow in the battle. (Then) he fixed a blazing arrow and decided to strike on the chest of Lava who was like fire burning everything, all the heroes. Seeing that blazing arrow illumining the ten quarters, he remembered Kuśa who knocked down his enemies. 'If at this time my strong, brave brother were here, I would not have

been humbled by Śatrughna, and there would not have been excessive fear.' When the noble Lava was thinking like this, a mighty, fierce arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world, stuck to (i.e. struck) his chest. At that time the hero, struck by the king's arrow became unconscious in the battle adorned with the heads of all heroes.

CHAPTER SIXTYTHREE

Kuśa's Victory

Śeṣa said:

1-3. Seeing Lava, the destroyer of his enemies, unconscious, Śatrughna, the very mighty one, obtained victory in the battle. Putting Lava, the boy adorned with a helmet etc. and the likeness of Rāma in form, in the chariot he desired to go from there. Seeing that their friend was arrested by the enemy, the boys who were full of grief, quickly reported it to his mother, Sītā.

The boys said:

4-9. O mother Jānakī, your son forcibly snatched the horse of some proud king endowed with power. Then, O Jānakī, the great brave boy vanquished all the army. Later also he got victory. Having made that king unconscious, he obtained victory in the battle. Then the very fearful king, having given up the swoon (i.e. having regained consciousness), got angry and knocked down your son on the battlefield. We had in the beginning warded him off (saying): "Do not seize this excellent horse." Despising all of us, the brāhmaṇas who have mastered the Vedas, (he seized him)."

Hearing these very terrible words of the boys, she fell on the ground and full of grief she wept.

Sītā said:

10-20. How is the cruel king fighting with the boy? He who

has vanquished my son, has a wicked mind as a result of impious deeds. O hero Lava, where are you, full of great power? How (is it that) you seized the excellent horse of the unkind king? You are a boy, they are invincible and proficient in (the use of) all weapons. They were in their chariots, (while) you were without a chariot? How can the fight (be said to) be (between two) equal (parties)? With you (i.e. in your company) I gave up (i.e. did not mind) the unhappiness due to Rāma's having abandoned me. Now without you, how shall I live in the forest? Come to me; release the sarcificial horse; let this king go. You who wash away (i.e. remove) my sorrow, do not realise my sorrow. Had Kuśa, the crest-jewel of the brave, been here today, he would have (by) now freed you from the vicinity of the king. Due to my (bad) luck he too is not nearby. Now what shall I do? It is just my fate that is the cause for the rise of (this) sorrow.

The glorious one scratching the earth with the toe of her foot and with tears in both her eyes, wept much like this. She said to the boys: "This one (i.e. Lava) is a child, and he (i.e. Śatrughna) is a king. How and where will he go on having vanquished my son in the battle?" When this Jānakī who looked upon her husband as her god was speaking like this, Kuśa along with great sages came (back) from Ujjayinī. After having worshipped Mahākāla on the fourteenth day of the dark half of Māgha and after having secured many boons from him, he came in the vicinity of (i.e. to) his mother.

21-28a. Seeing Jānakī afflicted and overcome with fear and with tears produced in her eyes, and helpless due to being overcome with grief, he, being anxious, said. At that time, his (right) arm, throbbing and indicating fight, said (to him). In the heart of the mighty warrior there was great enthusiasm to fight. He spoke to his mother, speaking piteously in a faltering voice: "When I, your son, have stood by you, your affliction has gone. When I am alive, tears should not fall from (your) eyes." He, of a courageous mind, said to his mother who was sad with tears, who was speaking in a piteous and faltering voice, who was instantly unhappy due to Lava's being bounded by grief. "Where is my brother, the destroyer of his enemies, who having come to have known that I have arrived, would always come near me?

How (is it that) the hero is not seen? Where has the hero gone to play? Or with whom has he, due to his being a child, gone to see (i.e. look for) me? O my mother, why do you weep? Where is that Lava (now)? Tell me all that is the cause of your grief."

28b-32. Hearing those words of her son, she who was afflicted, said to Kuśa: "Some king, protecting a horse, has seized Lava. My boy bound here the horse fit for the sacrificial rite. The mighty one, all alone vanquished many guards (of the horse). The king, having made him unconscious, bound him in the battle. The boys who had gone with him, told me like this. Then having heard that Lava was arrested, I became distressed. (Now) you who have come in time (should) forcibly release him from the excellent king." Having heard his mother's words, Kuśa, full of anger, biting his lips and gnawing his teeth, said to her:

Kuśa said:

33-38. O mother, know that Lava is (surely) freed from the binding by the noose. With my arrows I (shall) now kill him with his entire army and horses (and elephants). Even if a god or a deity comes, or even Śiva comes, I shall free him with arrows having sharp joints. O mother, do not weep; vigourous fight here (i.e. in this world) leads to fame; (but) running away leads to infamy. O mother, give me a divine armour, and a bow with a string, so also a helmet and a sharp sword. Now I shall go to the battlefield; I shall vanquish the mighty army; I shall free my brother fainted on the battlefield. If, O mother, I do not to-day release your son from the great battle, then let your feet be angry with me on the earth.

Śeṣa said:

39-44a. With these words Jānakī, of auspicious characteristics, endowed him with blessings and gave him all the multitude of missiles: "O (my) son, go to fight, and free the unconscious Lava": Thus ordered, Kuśa who had put on an armour, who was decorated with ear-rings, who was powerful, who had worn a crown, who had a sword, who had a shield, who held a bow after putting the inexhaustible quiver on his shoulders powerful

like those of the lion, and who was the best among the warriors, saluted his mother's feet, and quickly went (to fight). When he speedily and quickly went to fight, he saw his (brother) Lava, the destroyer of hosts of enemies. The very great warriors saw Kuśa coming like Yama approaching to destrory the entire universe.

44b-51. Lava, seeing his very mighty brother Kuśa resembling wind, coming, shone very much like fire. Having freed himself from the chariot, he went out to fight. Kuśa threw all the heroes on the battlefield into the eastern direction. Lava, through anger, urged on (i.e. made flee) all of them into the western direction. O sage, the men in the army, pervaded by affliction caused by Kuśa's arrows and troubled by Lava's arrows resembled the eddies in the ocean with the waves rising. The entire army, troubled by the volleys of the arrows of Kuśa and Lava, did not get happiness. The frightened army repeatedly scattered here and there. No one endowed with might remained anywhere on the battlefield and desired to fight. At this time Śatrughna who tormented his enemies went to fight with the hero Kuśa resembling Lava. The killer of the heroes of his enemy seated in a golden chariot, seeing Kuśa full of power and resembling Rāma's form, said:

Śatrughna said:

52-56. Who are you, very mighty one, and resembling your brother Lava? O great hero, what is your name? Who is your father? Who is your mother? O best of men, how (is it that) you are staying in the forest resorted to by brāhmaṇas? O very powerful one, tell me everything so that I shall fight with you.

Hearing these words, Kuśa, filling with noise the battlefield with his voice grave like that of the clouds, spoke to the king: "(I know) only (that) Sītā, devoted to her husband, gave me birth. Devoted to worshipping the feet of Vālmīki, we two live in the forest. O sinless king, we are engaged in serving our mother, are proficient in all lores (sciences and arts); we are known as Kuśa and Lava.

57-65. Who are you, the hero, desiring to fight? Why is the excellent horse let loose? Today in the fight, you, possessing

power, are the victor. O king, if you are a warrior, fight with me. Now I shall knock you down in the battle." Śatrughna, knowing him to be the son of Sītā from Rāma, was amazed in his heart and angrily took his bow. Seeing him having taken a bow, Kuśa, full of anger, stretched his own very strong and excellent bow. Śatrughna who knew (the use of) all weapons discharged sharp arrows. Kuśa, laughing, easily cut them off in the battle. O sage, hundreds and thousands of arrows of (i.e. discharged by) Kuśa and the king (i.e. Śatrughna) pervaded the entire world. It was a wonder. The mighty Kuśa quickly burnt all of them with the missile presided ovey by the Fire. The brave king quelled it with the missile presided over by Rain. The king who was very brave, put it down with the missile presided over by Vāyu. Then everywhere on the battlefield strong wind blew. He covered the wind that disturbed (everything) with the missile presided over by Mountain. The king cut off the mountain-stones with a thunderbolt-like missile. Then that very great warrior Kuśa discharged the missile presided over by Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). That missile presided over by Nārāyaṇa, was not able to hurt the king.

66-79. Then Kuśa got very angry. He, given to anger, spoke to Śatrughna having great might and valour: "I think you are a great hero, getting victory in the battle, as my fearful missile presided over by Nārāyaṇa, did not hurt you. O king, today with three arrows I shall knock you down on the ground. If I do not do this, hear my solemn declaration. I shall have in this world the sin of the man who, having obtained human body (i.e. birth) due to crores of religious deeds, does not honour it through delusion. On this battlefield you should be attentive. I shall instantly knock you down on the ground." Saying so, he fixed on his bow a fierce arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world after aiming it at the great expansive, hard chest of the enemy. Seeing that arrow fixed, Śatrughna, full of anger, discharged sharp arrows piercing the skin of Kuśa. The arrow of a terrible form, resembling fire, and hissing like a serpent, went forth to pierce his chest. The best king, remembering Rāma, quickly noticed the arrow. He cut off that arrow having sharp joints and discharged by Kuśa. Then, Kuśa who was very angry due to his arrow being cut off, fixed on his bow an-

other arrow with sharp joints. While he, full of power decided to pierce his chest (with an arrow), he cut off his arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world. Then Kuśa, full of anger, remembered his mother's feet, and fixed on his arrow a third wonderful arrow. Śatrughna too, quickly took an arrow to cut it off. Just then, he, pierced by the arrow fell on the ground. When Śatrughna fell, there was a great wailing. Kuśa. proud of his might, obtained victory then.

CHAPTER SIXTYFOUR

Rāma's Army Revives

Śeṣa said:

1-5. Seeing Śatrughna fallen, the excellent king Suratha getting into his very wonderful chariot fashioned with jewels went (to fight). Realising that Puṣkala was formerly defeated in battle, he went to fight with Lava, the crest-jewel (i.e. the best) of the great heroes. Suratha, the crest-jewel (i.e. the best) of the great heroes, having reached Kuśa and discharging arrows in various ways, troubled him. With ten arrows with rising flames he deprived Suratha of his chariot. He speedily cut off his bow, strong and strung. The battle between the two heroes (fought with) destruction of missiles and counter-missiles and throwing and counter-throwing of missiles was fierce and thrilling.

6-11. When the invincible king Suratha was very much exerting in the battle, Kuśa thought: 'What should I do (now) in the battle?' He, possessing great power, having thought, took a sharp, fierce arrow to kill the king. Seeing the arrow resembling the destructive fire at the end of the world, coming (towards him), he decided to cut it off. Just then the great arrow struck him. Then the very brave hero fainted in the battle, and fell in the interior of his chariot. The charioteer took him (away). Seeing on the fall of Suratha Kuśa getting victory and scaring the hosts of heroes, (Hanūmat), the son of Wind, went (to fight with him).

Seeing the powerful monkey, the son of Wind, coming (to fight), he grinned, as it were provoking him to become wrathful.

12-17a. He said to Hanūmat: "Come face to face with me. I shall pierce (you) with a thousand arrows. You will go to (i.e. fall on) the ground dead." Hanūmat, who was addressed like this, realising that Rāma's son was very powerful and that the duty for the master should be done, ran (to him). The very powerful one, having quickly uprooted a lofty śāla-tree having a hundred branches and aiming at Kuśa's chest, went to fight with him. The mighty one, seeing Hanūmat with a śāla-tree in his hand coming (to him), pierced him on his chest with three arrows having sharp horse-shoe-shaped heads and resembling the (crescent) moon. The son of Wind (i.e. Hanūmat), being quickly pierced by the powerful Kuśa, gnawing his teeth struck him on his chest with the śāla-tree. The bov (though) struck with the śāla did not shake a bit.

17b-22. Then the heroes through amazement (i.e. being amazed) praised him on account of his being a child. That hero Kuśa, knowing (the use of) great missiles (and) being struck with the śāla-tree, took through anger a destructive missile to kill his enemy. Seeing the invincible destructive missile discharged by Kuśa, (Hanūmat) mentally meditated upon Rāma, the destroyer of the difficulties of his devotees. Then that missile causing great pain, which was discharged by Kuśa, stuck to (i.e. struck) the chest of Māruti and he again swooned. Seeing the monkey (fallen) unconscious, the powerful one (i.e. Kuśa) pierced with sharp arrows that entire huge army. That entire army consisting of four divisions, shattered with myriads of arrows of (i.e. discharged by) him on the battlefield took to fleeing.

23-28. Then Sugrīva, the lord of monkeys and a great protector uprooted many trees and ran to the great warrior Kuśa. Kuśa, laughing, easily cut off all (those) trees. The mighty one again speedily cut off the trees that came to him. Afflicted by many arrows on the battlefield, Sugrīva took a fearful mountain (to hit it) on the head of Kuśa. Seeing the mountain coming (to him) Kuśa pounded it with arrows (discharged) in many ways and quickly rendered it fit for Mahārudra's body (i.e. converted it into ashes). Seeing that great feat performed by the boy, Sugrīva was averse to the hope of (i.e. was disappointed towards) victory on the

battlefield. Seeing in the battle invincible Kuśa striking (Hanūmat's tail) and becoming very impatient and overpowered with anger, he took a mountain to strike him (with).

29-36. Seeing Sugrīva eager to strike him, he carefully struck him with many arrows with sharp joints. He, struck with arrows of different kinds, and being afflicted, was exasperated to kill Kuśa, (and) went, (and) took a śāla-tree. Then also that hero Kuśa took a missile presided over by Varuṇa and he, the elder brother of Lava, bound him with that strong noose. He being (thus) bound with soft nooses by the powerful Kuśa, fell on the battlefield adorned by great heroes. Seeing Sugrīva fallen, the warriors fled everywhere. Lava's brother, the crest-jewel (i.e. the best) of great heroes, got victory. Just then, Lava, having vanquished warriors, also Puṣkala, Aṅgada, Pratāpāgrya, Vīramaṇi, and also other kings, got victory in the battle, and came to his brother who got victory in the battle and who destroyed crores of enemies. O sage, pleased with each other, they embraced each other. They obtained victory. Then, being elated they talked (to each other).

Lava said:

37-42. O brother, because of your grace, the ocean of the battle has been crossed (by me). Now we shall cleanse the well-adorned battlefield.

Saying so the heroes, Kuśa and Lava, went (to the battlefield). (Lava) took the beautiful crest-jewel of the king which was decked with gold; so also the hero Lava took the auspicious crown of Puṣkala. He also took the very costly armlets of Śatrughna, and of someone else. Seizing the heap of weapons and also Hanūmat, the lord of monkeys, they went near Sugrīva and tied both (Hanūmat and Sugrīva). The younger brother of Kuśa held the tail of the son of Wind and said to his brother: "I shall take (him) to my (i.e. our) abode holding him by his tail, to please our mother, for the sages' sons to play (with) and for (satisfying) my curiosity."

43-49. Hearing these words, Kuśa then spoke to Lava: "I shall seize this strong, powerful monkey." Speaking like this, the two, best among the mighty, having bound the two at

their tails and holding the two powerful ones, went to their hermitage. The two best monkeys (i.e. Hanūmat and Sugrīva) seeing them going to their hermitage, trembled and said to each other in frightened words (i.e. words full of fear). Hanūmat, with his mind soft through fear, said to the lord of monkeys: "These two sons of Rāma will take us to their hermitage. Formerly I who had gone to Jānakī, had done a (good) act for Jānakī. At that time the lovely queen Jānakī was (well) disposed to me. That Vaidehī will see me bound with a noose by my enemy. The excellent one will then laugh (and) I shall be ashamed. What should I do now? My life will end. A great misery has befallen. What will that Rāma do."

50-52. Hearing his words (Sugrīva said): "O great monkey, my (condition) is the same. If he will take me like this, I shall die." When the two who were very much frightened, were telling like this to each other, Kuśa and Lava energetically reached the house of their mother. Seeing them to have come, their mother was delighted. With great affection she embraced her two sons, one by one.

53-57. Jānakī, having seen the two monkeys, Hanūmat and Sugrīva, the best among the heroes and the lord of monkeys, held by the two (i.e. by Kuśa and Lava) by their tails, laughed. The excellent lady, seeing them tied with nooses, speaking for their release, said these excellent words: "O my (two) sons, free these very brave and very powerful monkeys. If the two big ones see me, they will cast their life. This is the hero Hanūmat, who burnt the city of (the son of) Danu (i.e. the demon Rāvaṇa). This also is the lord of bears, the king of all monkeys. Why have you, and where have you arrested them? What have you done (to them) through disrespect? That (you) two young ones have seized them by their tails makes me wonder."

58-66a. Hearing these soft words of the mother, the two sons, best in politeness and possessing great power, then said: "Mother, there is a strong king (named) Rāma, the son of Daśaratha. He has released a horse, well-adorned and having a golden note on his forehead. O mother, this is what is written there: 'My mother has given birth to one brave (son only).

Those who are (i.e. call themselves) kṣatriyas, may seize (the horse); otherwise, they should worship the soles of (my) feet.' Then, O you chaste lady, I thought in my heart: 'Are you not a kṣatriya lady? Would you not be the mother of heroes? (i.e. Have you not given birth to heroes?) Seeing the arrogance of the king, I have forcibly seized the horse. (Our) hero Kuśa has conquered and destroyed his army in the battle. O you who look upon your husband as a deity, know this to be the crown of the king. This also is the crown of another hero, the noble Puṣkala. Know this to be another crown, adorned with gems and pearls. O excellent one, know this to be the king's attractive horse, going at will, which is for my strong brother to ride upon. I have brought these two monkeys, the best among the strong, to play (with). They, who fight, are (brought here) for (i.e. to satisfy) your curiosity?"

66b-67a. Hearing these words, Jānakī, who looked upon her husband as a deity, repeatedly said to her brave sons: "'Release them".

Sītā said:

67b-69a. You have done injustice. You have snatched Rāma's great horse. You have knocked down many soldiers. You have bound these lords of monkeys. The brave horse of your father is let loose by him for a sacrifice. You have snatched his horse too (which is to be used) in the best sacrifice.

69b-75a. Release these two monkeys; release this best among horses. Apologise to the very angry Śatrughna, the brother of the king.

Hearing these words of their mother, the best among the mighty, said: "We have conquered that king possessing might in the manner of kṣatriyas. Unfairness is not possible in the case of us who fight in the manner of kṣatriyas. Formerly Vālmīki said to us who were learning (under him): 'In the hermitage a horse fit for a sacrificial rite was seized. Therefore, a son would (i.e. could) fight with his father, or a younger brother with his (elder) brother; or a disciple with his teacher. By that no sin accrues.' By your order now we shall give (back)

the excellent horse. We shall release these two monkeys. We shall do (i.e. carry out) your words (i.e. your order)."

75b-80. Saying so, the two went to the battlefield, released the lords of monkeys, so also the horse fit for the horse-sacrifice. Queen Sītā, having heard from her sons about the destruction of the army, reflecting in her mind upon Śrī Rāma, looked at the sun, the witness. "If by mind, words or deeds I worship Raghunātha and none else, then let this king revive. O you lord of the worlds, due to my truth (fulness) let the entire big army, forcibly destroyed by my sons, revive." While Jānakī who looked upon her husband as her deity, was talking like this, the entire army revived on the battlefield.

CHAPTER SIXTYFIVE

Sumati Describes the Adventurous Events to Rāma

Śeṣa said:

1-4. In a moment Śatrughna, the hero, gave up his swoon on the battlefield. Other mighty warriors also, who had fainted, revived. Śatrughna saw the best among the horses, standing before him, and saw (i.e. found) himself to be without the helmet and the army revived. Seeing this he wondered in his mind and spoke to Sumati, the best among ministers, who had then revived: "Having shown pity, the boy has returned the horse for the completion of the sacrifice. We (shall) quickly go to Rāma desiring (i.e. waiting for) the horse's arrival."

5-11. Saying so, he, having got into the chariot and without (the sounds of) kettle-drums and conches, quickly went to Rāma far away from the hermitage. After him moved the great army full of four divisions and making the lord of serpents broken down due to (i.e. under) its load. Having quickly crossed Gaṅgā, full of water having waves, he went to his own country adorned with his own men. The king was accompanied by Puṣkala and Suratha; he, holding a bow, was seated in a jewelled

chariot; he had put the horse in front; the horse was adorned with jewelled necklaces; and on his head only shone the white umbrella. Surrounded by thousands of chariots and mighty kings who were adorned with heroic cries, he in due course reached the city, adorned by the solar dynasty, decorated with many excellent flags, and shining with citadels.

12-18. Rāma, having heard that the army along with this Śatrughna and with the brave Puṣkala had reached the city, was delighted in many ways. Showing Lakṣmaṇa the great army with four constituents, he sent him, his brother, best among the mighty (to receive it). Lakṣmaṇa having along with the army gone to his army, and being beside himself due to joy, embraced him whose body was adorned with wounds. Being asked about the safety everywhere, he told him the news. Śatrughna became very joyful and met with happiness. The brave and noble-minded son of Sumitrā, being seated along with his brother (Śatrughna) in his own chariot, went along with the great army to the city. Sarayū had sacred water, had purified the three worlds, was purified by the dust of Rāma's feet, was bright like the autumnal moon, was crowded with swans and ducks, was adorned with the ruddy geese, and was very much resounding with birds, having very strange colours.

19-33. Rāmacandra had abundantly got constructed there pavilions resounding with the separate recitals of brāhmaṇas knowing the Vedas. There were many kṣatriyas with their hands well-adorned with bows, and filling the earth with the noise of the various twangs of their bow-strings. There brāhmaṇas enjoyed (i.e. ate) charming and various kinds of food. Praising one another, they talked about (i.e. discussed) interesting news (topics). There were foods like rice boiled with milk, which were white and resembled the moon. They were full of (i.e. mixed) with profuse milk and ghee and were mixed with sugar. There were many small round cakes resembling the orb of the moon in beauty. They were very lovely and were made fragrant with perfumes of camphor etc. There were soft components of macaroni having hundred holes or no holes. With sweet food there were baked thin cakes that were dressed. There was boiled rice which resembled lotuses, which was mixed with kidney-bean-seeds, which was having a perfume, and which gave delight. The

boiled rice was (mixed) with curd, and accompanied by (i.e. mixed with) camphor. It was prepared by cooks cooking tasty food, and served by waiters. There, certain brāhmaṇas on seeing the rice boiled with milk put (i.e. served) in their dishes, said to one another: "What is this wonder that is seen (here)? Is it the orb of the moon fallen from the sky through the fear of darkness? Here there is the wonderful nectar which puts an end to death." Hearing that, another excellent brāhmaṇa, with his eyes red through anger, said. "The orb of the moon is not at all wet with nectar. The form of the moon is one (only). Then how can it be seen to be similar in every individual dish of a thousand of brāhmaṇas? Therefore, know that it may be a lotus or camphor. Do not regard it to be the moon's orb endowed with white lustre." Just then another (brāhmaṇa) overcome with anger, shaking his head (said): "These foolish brāhmaṇas, not proficient in the knowledge of tastes, do not know: This is cooked with the bulb of campaka. They are sweet lotuses."

34-40a. O sages, brāhmaṇas who (generally) ate bulbs and roots, were pleased and were very eager to know the tastes and thus conjectured among themselves. Just then another brāhmaṇa said: "The existence of the kṣatriyas is excellent. They will enjoy food like that served on account of their great religious merit." To him a brāhmaṇa said at that time: "Such is the fruit of charity. Those who give to brāhmaṇas, obtain what is desired. Such food will never be seen by them who have never repeatedly worshipped Viṣṇu with various offerings of eatables. Those men who feed brāhmaṇas with (foods of) various tastes, enjoy (food of) sweet taste abandoned by (i.e. kept away from) the sight of the sinners. Those best brāhmaṇas, proficient in the Vedas, thus fed with (foods of) desired tastes, recited (the Vedic texts) in the pavilion. Being delighted, some danced, some laughed and some cried. A great festivity took place there.

40b-52. Then Śatrughna came there. Rāma, seeing Śatrughna coming along with Puṣkala, could not contain the joy rising (in his heart). Then Rāma got up (to greet his) brother stuck to (i.e. fallen at) his feet. Seeing his brother fallen at his feet, Rāma firmly embraced him who was full of politeness, and whose body was adorned with wounds. Shedding tears in various ways (i.e. profusely) on his head, Rāghava got great delight which is far

away from (i.e. which cannot be expressed in) words. He, overcome with (Puṣkala's) modesty, took polite Puṣkala who had bent at his feet, between his arms, and embraced him much (i.e. closely). Raghunātha himself closely embraced others also like Hanūmat, the hero Sugrīva, so also Aṅgada, Lakṣmīnidhi, the son of Janaka, Pratāpāgrya, conquering his enemies, Subāhu, Sumada, the hero Vimala, the gem(-like) Nīla, Satyavat, Vīramaṇi, and Suratha, the servant of Rāma—who were affectionate and had bowed at his feet. Sumati, the lofty one, being pleased and standing in front of Rāma, closely embraced Śrī Raghupati favouring his devotees. Then Rāma, the best among the eloquent, seeing his minister come near him, spoke with great delight to him: "O Sumati, O best among speakers, O best among ministers, tell me who are these kings. How (i.e. for what reason) have all of them come here? Where (i.e. to which places) did the horse go? By whom was he arrested? How was he released by my brother having great might?"

Śeṣa said:

53. Thus addressed that very intelligent Sumati, the best among ministers, laughed and spoke in a voice grave like the (sound of the thundering) clouds.

Sumati said:

54-59a. How should I speak before you, the omniscient one? You are asking in the manner of the world. You who are everything, know all. Yet, O crest-jewel (i.e. the best) of all kings, always holding your order on my head (i.e. obeying your order), I shall speak; today (i.e. now) listen to it. O lord, by your grace, your horse, adorned with a note on his forehead, wandered on the surface of the earth. No one, proud (through the pride) of his name and power, seized him. (On the contrary) having given their kingdom (to you), they saluted your lotus-like feet. Who, desiring victory (and) free from old age and death, seized (i.e. would seize) the best horse of the killer of Rāvaṇa, the lord of demons? Your lovely horse had just gone to Ahicchatra (city).

59b-62. The king of that city, Sumada, heard that your horse had come; and the very powerful one, with his sons, and surro-

unded by his entire mighty army, offered his entire kingdom in which the elements causing nuisance were destroyed, O lord, That king Sumada who having propitiated the mother, the leader of the worlds, Jagadambikā, obtained a long life and a kingdom free from bad elements, salutes you, served by lords. Accept, with a favourable eye, him who desires to see you for a long time.

63-71. Then in king Subāhu's city, full of army, his son Damana seized the best horse. With that Damana a great battle took place. Having caused (Damana,) the son of Subāhu, to faint, Puṣkala obtained victory. Then Subāhu, getting angry, fought, in the battle with (Hanūmat,) the son of Wind, the servant of your lotus-like feet, and best among the mighty. Being struck by his foot, he obtained the knowledge covered due to the curse. Having dedicated everything to you, he has become the protector of the horse. This king Subāhu, of a lofty body, salutes you. Sprinkle with a favourable glance king Subāhu, proficient in political wisdom. Then the horse that was let loose, plunged into the puddle in Revā. There the mighty Śatrughna obtained the deluding missile. Then the horse went to Śivapura, adorned with the residence of Śiva. You know what happened there, as you yourself had come there. The demon Vidyunmālin was killed; Satyavat then joined (us); O you highly intelligent one, you know about our battle with Suratha. Then the horse, released from Kuṇḍalaka, roamed everywhere. Nobody proud of his might, seized him.

72-80. Then the horse reached Vālmīki's hermitage. O best among men, listen to what curious thing took place there. Then a strongest boy, sixteen years old and having resemblance with you, seeing the horse marked with a note, seized him. Then O best of men, a great battle with Kālajit took place. He was struck by the hero with a sharp missile. Many very mighty ones like Puṣkala were killed in the battle. The crest-jewel of the heroes made even Śatrughna unconscious. Then the brave king, the best among the mighty, feeling great pain in his heart, angrily made him unconscious. When he was made unconscious by the king, another (warrior) came (there). He and this one, having revived, destroyed your army. Having seized the weapons and ornaments of all that were unconscious, and taking (with) them

the two monkeys that were bound, the two (i.e. Kuśa and Lava) went to their own hermitage. Having favoured (us) he gave (back) the great sacrificial horse. The entire army that was dead was brought back to life. Having taken the horse, we have come to your vicinity. I have told you these words (since) I knew this only.

CHAPTER SIXTYSIX

Singing of Rāmāyaṇa by Kuśa and Lava

Śeṣa said:

1. Having come to know that the two boys in Vālmīki's hermitage were his sons, he (i.e. Rāma) went to Vālmīki.

Śrī Rāma said:

2-5. Who are the two boys having my resemblance and the best among the mighty? Why do the two, skilled in archery, live there? Having heard what the minister told about them who easily bound Śatrughna and Hanūmat, I am amazed. Therefore, O sage, tell me all the deeds of the two boys, since a great, desirable delight thus comes to me.

Hearing those words of the intelligent king of kings, he (i.e. Vālmīki) spoke important words, with clear syllables.

Vālmīki said:

6-11a. How is it that you who live in the heart of men, would not have the knowledge (of the deeds)? Yet, to delight you I am telling it now. O king, these two boys, the best among the mighty, who resemble your form, and have charming bodies like yours, (live) in my hermitage. When you abandoned in the fierce forest the pregnant, innocent Jānakī, afflicted with grief and repeatedly crying like an osprey, I saw the daughter of Janaka and brought your righteous wife to (my) hermitage. The sages' sons constructed a lovely hut of leaves for her. In it

she gave birth to the two sons illumining the ten quarters. It is clear that I named them Kuśa and Lava.

11b-15. As the moon waxes in the bright half of the month, they grew there continuously. In due course I performed all (sacraments) like the thread-ceremony. O king, I made them grasp (i.e. taught them) all the Vedas with their limbs. From my mouth they learnt all the Upaniṣads, so also Āyurveda, archery, science of (the use of) weapons, so also the lore of magic; I made them skilled in music. The two, unsteady and fickle of heart, skilled in all lores, sang on the bank of Gaṅgā and in the bowers of creepers and in groves. Then, O best of Raghus, I got the highest delight.

16-21a. Having given them all the missiles, I put my hand on their heads (i.e. I blessed them). Seeing them extremely skilled in singing and proficient in knowing the difference among the notes like the first, the fifth and the third (notes of the gamut), people were wonder-struck. Seeing them like that I made them sing charmingly. Due to my knowledge of the future, I composed the holy Rāmāyaṇa. The two, skilled in (playing upon) the tabor, musical instruments, lutes, sang in every forest and infatuated the beasts and the birds. O Rāma, the sweetness of the singing of your sons is wonderful. One night Varuṇa took the two boys to hear them. By the order of the god the two boys who have a charming age and form, who have crossed the ocean of the science of music, sang sweely there.

21b-28a. Varuṇa along with the members of his family and singers, heard your highly sweet, charming pure deeds. Having heard with Mitra your deeds sweeter than even nectar, O Rāma, Varuṇa was pleased. With the functions of his life and senses taken away by the joy of music, he did not direct (i.e. allow) your sons to come back (to the earth). The two boys, though enticed by charming, great pleasures, did not swerve, as a result of (their) remembering the feet of their teacher and their mother. I too then went to the excellent abode of Varuṇa. O lord, Varuṇa, having affection (for me), worshipped me. To Varuṇa who, though he knew everything about the birth and deeds of the two boys, too asked me (about them), I told everything about the birth of the boys and their acquisition of knowledge.

Hearing that they are Sītā's sons, he (presented them) with garments and ornaments. To honour my words 'the (articles) should be accepted, as they are given by a god,' the two princes accepted whatever was given by Varuṇa who was pleased with their musical instruments, singing, knowledge, age and virtues.

28b-36. Then the fortunate Varuṇa asked me with reference to (i.e. about) Sītā: (He said:) "Sītā is at the head of chaste ladies; she is endowed with beauty and good character; she has brave sons; she is noble; she does not deserve to be abandoned. O descendant of Raghu, there is a great loss (to Rāma) in (i.e. due to) abandoning her. She is the greatest well-being of all well-beings, which never perishes. O Rāma, the hearing about and narration of the account of whom is holy, what loss is thereby if the stupid sinful persons do not realise her greatness? Her purifying behaviour is always before us. Those who reflect upon Sītā's feet, instantly attain perfection; by the mere thought about her, these divine functions of the worlds like origin, maintenance and destruction, take place. Sitā is death; is nectar; (it is) she (who) gives heat; she sends down rain. Your Jānakī is heaven, salvation, penance, deep abstract meditation and charity. None else but your dear Sītā alone creates Brahmā, Śiva and other gods like me. You are the father of all the worlds, and Sītā is the mother. Therefore, your erroneous view about her is not at all proper for (i.e. will not at all lead to) happiness.

37-43. You, the omniscient one, the lord, yourself know that Sītā, the daughter of the Earth, who is dearer to you than your own life, is ever pure. Therefore, you should respect Jānakī who is pure and dear to you. (If you do this,) there will be no mortification of the curse for Sītā or for you. O Vālmīki, O best sage, you should actually tell these words of (i.e. uttered by) me to Rāma, the lord of the worlds." O lord, thus was I told by Varuṇa about your receiving Sītā. I was also told in the same way by all other gods. The gods, demons, all the gandharvas also, with minds full of curiosity, have heard the recital of Rāmāyaṇa done by your two sons. All of them were pleased, and they praised your two sons. By means of their form, singing, age and virtues, they have enticed the three worlds. Whatever was given by the gods to your two sons, has

been accepted. Sages (gave) them blessings; and from others they (received) fame.

44-51. Formerly the sages saw the world to be full of one Rāma (only). Now the entire world has become full of three Rāmas on account of your two sons. Formerly in the world only one form of Cupid was seen; but now with four Cupids (i.e. Cupid, Rāma, Kuśa and Lava), he will be born (i.e. will have four forms). O lord of kings, everywhere else Kuśa and Lava are declared to be Rāma's sons. Then why do you, a learned man, shrink (from accepting it)? O you crest-jewel among those having an auspicious fame, except in the case of your having abandoned Sītā, praise about all your deeds is heard. O Rāma, you who are the lord of the three worlds and are following a householder's life, should accept these two sons who are endowed with knowledge, good character and virtues. They will not leave their mother and stay with you. Therefore, you should invite your sons with their mother. Now by reviving the army, she has given a pious, convincing proof to all the people—even the sinking ones (i.e. sinners) (of her purity). O you who cut off the pride (of your enemies), it is, therefore, not unknown to us or to gods. In her purity (being established), what was (supposed to be) lost for the people, is indeed (proved to be) eternal.

Śeṣa said:

52-54. Thus Vālmīki enlightened Rāma, though he was omniscient. Praising and saluting Vālmīki, he spoke to Lakṣmaṇa: "O deer one, go, resorting to a chariot with Sumantra to bring Sītā, (my) virtuous wife, along with (our) sons. Telling her these my words and also the words of the sage and having (thus) enlightened her, quickly bring her back."

Lakṣmaṇa said:

55-59. O supreme one, O lord of all of us, by your order I shall go. If the queen will come, then my journey will be fruitful. If the chaste one, being displeased with me for my former fault (of having abandoned her in the forest), does not come, then I, coming (back alone) should be forgiven.

Speaking thus to Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa getting with Sumitra and a disciple of the sage into the chariot by the king's order, went to Sītā's hermitage. 'How should I propitiate Sītā who would know (i.e. remember) the former fault of me who always depend upon Rāma?' Thinking like this and (oscillating) between joy and fear, Lakṣmaṇa reached Sītā's hermitage, destroying fatigue.

60-69. Having got down from the chariot, he with his eyes (i.e. sight) checked by tears, repeatedly addressing her 'O noble one, O revered one, O respected one, O auspicious one', and with his entire body trembling, fell at her feet. She who was beside herself by love, caused him to rise (and said): "O dear one, why have you come to the forest dear to the sages. Is the king, the pearl from the pearl-oyster (in the form) of Kauśalyā, all right? Carried away merely by his fame, is he without anger towards me? By all he is called the ocean of auspicious virtues. Entering into the fear of infamy, he appointed you to abandon me. If after that his fame has become spotless, then the fame of me who, even by dying, spread his good fame, will be very firm. O brother-in-law, let me quickly have the proximity of my husband. Though he has abandoned me, I have not, in the least, forsaken him. The fruit (effect) depends upon the means (cause); but the cause is not dependent upon the fruit. Is Kauśalyā whose son is the protector of the three worlds, who is free from heart-rending grief, and who has always been full of compassion for me, all right? Are all kinsmen like Bharata all right? Is the noble Sumitrā, to whom I am dearer than her own life, all right? Have you also been abandoned like me (by the king) for his fame? What is difficult for the king, to whom his own self is not dear, to abandon (anything)?"

70-86. In this way she asked Rāma's younger brother in many ways. He said to her: "The king is all right. He is asking about your well-being. O queen, Kauśalyā, Sumitrā and other royal ladies that there are, have with love and with blessing asked about your well-being. O you auspicious one, I report to you the salutation, preceded by a question about your well-being, offered to you by Śatrughna and Bharata. O Jānakī, the preceptors, and all their wives, have given you blessings and O

auspicious one, have enquired about your well-being. The self-possessed one, not finding delight in anything else but you, is, truthfully inviting you, O beautiful lady. O daughter of Janaka, the lord, finding all the quarters vacant without you, weeps and makes others (us) also weep. O you born in the Videha country, he always remembers the place where you have stayed and looks upon it as occupied (by you), and says: "This hermitage of Vālmīki where Jānakī spends her time in (talking about) tidings about me, has become blessed." Our lord, while weeping, said something more to you. Listen to it: "There is no doubt that whatever is in the heart of the speaker does find an expression. People call me alone the lord of their lord; but I say that for them the unseen (destiny) is the independent cause. Even the lord of everything follows destiny in all his acts. Then, would not those that are ruled (by him), follow it in (times of) happiness or of misery? That inevitable cause which bore fruit at the time of bending the bow (of Śiva), the frenzy of Kaikeyī, the death of my father, going into the forest, your being kidnapped there, crossing of the ocean, killing of the lord of demons, at the time of receiving you (back), the truthfulness of my pledge, at the time of the murmur about (you, my) chaste wife, at the time of my again being connected with my relatives, my acquiring the kingdom, O beautiful lady, again at the time of separation from you, is again succeeding at the time of our re-union. Due to that (destiny) which falsified the Veda, due to which I followed (the ordinary) people (in abandoning you), I have become the first cause. The wise people follow destiny. Destiny wears out by fruition (enjoyment and suffering). That you (have exhausted) in the forest.

87-92. O Sītā, O you not seen by people (or by light), my causeless love for you, which is growing, having abandoned you (now) invites you respectfully. The merging of the purity of love takes place (i.e. the purity of love disappears), even if a fault is suspected (to be present in an individual). The wise ones should always enjoy that (pure) love. O good one, I have purified my love for you. It is not otherwise. It should be thought (i.e. borne in mind) that by me, following eminent persons, has been protected even this world in all conditions for the sake of purity, (even) through our censure, O queen;

for due to the acts of the great this confused world would perish. The fame of both of us is bright; the love of us is splendid; the families of us are bright; the acts of us are splendid. On the earth there would be bright singers of the fame of us. Those who are the devotees of us go to the end of (i.e. cross) the ocean of the worldly existence."

93-100. Being pleased with your virtues you were thus addressed by him. Make your mind compassionate to see the lotus-like feet of your husband. For you are prepared lovely garments, great ornaments, fragrant unguents, charming scents. For your delight Rāma has sent chariots and female servants; so also an umbrella, white chowries, elephants and horses, O beautiful one. Followed by me and praised by best brāhmaṇas and by bards and panegyrists, saluted by the ladies in the city, served by warriors, covered with flowers by celestial ladies, giving wealth to brāhmaṇas as desired by them, having put in front the two sons mounted on elephants, you the queen, the ruler of men, (should) go to Ayodhyā, your city. When you have gone there and are united with your husband, today there will be songs (sung) for all royal ladies and all the wives of sages that have come from all (places), so also for those (that have come) from Kosala.

Śeṣa said:

101-104. Hearing this request that respectable Sītā said to him: "I have not been the cause of the king's fame; on the contrary I myself am infamy. Void of good *dharma*, *kāma* and *artha*, what can I accomplish for him? Under the circumstances who would have faith in your autocratic king? By one like me born in an auspicious family the faults of my husband that are in my mind should never be told directly or indirectly. He does not move away from my heart in that form in which he settled in my heart at the time of (our) marriage.

105-109. O Lakṣmaṇa, these two sons of me are born from the portion of his lustre. They are the sprouts of his family; they are very brave; they are skilled in archery. Take them to their father and carefully fondle them. Staying here at will I shall propitiate Rāma by means of penance. O noble one, you should tell (i.e. convey) my salutation to the feet of the revered ones;

so also (you should tell) all after going from here about my well-being." Sītā directed her sons (as): "Go to your father. You have to serve him only, who would give you his position." The two boys, Kuśa and Lava, though thus ordered, were, unwilling (to go), (but) went there with Lakṣmaṇa due to the words of (i.e. due to being ordered by) Vālmīki.

110-111. The two sons went near the lotus-like feet of Vālmīki. Lakṣmaṇa also, going along with the two boys, saluted him. These i.e. Vālmīki, Lakṣmaṇa, and the two boys— gathered, and knowing Rāma to be in the assembly, they, being eager (to see him), went (there).

112-120. The very intelligent Lakṣmaṇa, full of joy and sorrow, having saluted (Rāma), reported to Rāma all the words of (i.e. uttered by) Sītā. By the words of Sītā's message Rāma fell into a swoon (i.e. he became unconscious). Having regained consciousness he said to Lakṣmaṇa who knew the way of life: "O friend, go there again and having told her my words bring her quickly by making great effort; well-being to you. (You should say to her:) 'Have you, practising penance in the forest, thought of, heard of, or seen any other course than (coming to) me, that, O Jānakī, you are not coming (to me)? By your own desire you went from here to the forest, dear to sages. You honoured those wives of the sages and saw the groups of sages. O beautiful lady, your desire is fulfilled. Then why no you not today come (back)? Taking note of (i.e. considering) your own desire you would not find fault with me. O you lady of beautiful thighs, to a lady, whether she goes or does not go (away from her husband), her husband alone, whether he is without virtues or is an ocean of virtues, is the recourse. Then what about him who is desired by her mind? Whatever act is done by a noble woman, is (done) for pleasing her husband. I was pleased with you formerly; now I am extremely pleased (with you). Sacrifice, muttering prayers, penance, charity, vows, (visits to) sacred places, (showing) pity etc., all become fruitful and deities are pleased, when I am pleased. There is no doubt about it.' "

Śeṣa said:

121-122. Taking this message to (i.e. for) Sītā from the lord of the world (i.e. Rāma) Lakṣmaṇa bowed down through

attachment for Rāma and said to the lord of souls: "I shall tell those words full of politeness, which this one has uttered for bringing back Sītā."

123-125. Saying so and saluting the feet of Raghunātha, Lakṣmaṇa getting into a speedy chariot quickly went to Sītā. Having looked at the fortunate and very energetic sons of Rāma, making his face lovely by having a smile on Vālmīki said: "O sons, playing on the lute, sing (songs describing) the wonderful good deeds of Rāma, adorning them with your sweet voice."

126-133. Thus addressed, the two noble sons (of Rāma) sang Rāma's good deeds which give great religious merit, which were beautified with good sentences and words, in which the way of righteousness was actually present, in which chastity was present, so also were present brotherly affection and devotion to the teacher, where appeared in a bodily form the behaviour of the master and the servant, where punishment to one behaving unrighteously was actually (found to be inflicted) from (i.e. by) the descendant of Raghu. The singing pervaded the world; even in heaven gods remained (motionless); hearing which singing even kinnaras fainted in a moment. The entire assembly there on hearing the sound of the lute adorned with beating of time and measure, became (motionless) like a doll painted (in a picture). Rāma and other kings shed tears of joy; they being enticed by the singing of the fifth note, remained like (being) painted (i.e. motionless). Then seeing (Rāma) intent on (giving) a gift they laughed and with their eyebrows knit a little spoke to the best sage Vālmīki:

134-136. "O sage, a great injustice is being done by this king, since he (trying) to allure us desires to give us gold coins. Accepting gifts is recommended for brāhmaṇas and not for others. A king (i.e. a kṣatriya) intent upon receiving a gift is fit for hell only. (This) king is enjoying the kingdom, let free by us through compassion. How does he, adorned with good fortune, desire to give (us) gold coins?"

137-140. Vālmīki, full of compassion, looked at them who spoke like this and told them: "O you who are most prudent, know (this to be) your father." Hearing these words of the sage the two boys, full of modesty, and extremely pure due to their devotion to their mother, stuck to (i.e. fell at) the feet of

the king. Full of joy, Rāma firmly clasped the two boys to his body. He thought that the actual likenesses of his wife had stood by him. O best sage, the assembly too, seeing the charming faces of Rāma's sons, regarded Jānakī's devotion to her husband to be true.

141. Having heard this spoken from the mouth of Śeṣa, Vātsyāyana said: "I have a mind (i.e. I desire) to hear Rāmāyaṇa, full of all morality."

Vātsyāyana said:

142. At what time was this great Rāmāyaṇa composed? Why did he (i.e. Vālmīki) compose it? What is described in it? Tell me that.

Śeṣa said:

143-146a. Once the brāhmaṇa Vālmīki went to a great forest where there were tāla (trees), tamāla (trees) and blossomed kiṁśuka (trees); where ketakī (tree) made the forest fragrant with its pollen and was seen like the great lustre of the moon by having white heads; where there were many blossomed trees like campaka, bakula, and kovidāra and kuraṇṭaka. The forest sounded with the notes of cuckoos and the hummings of bees; it was charming everywhere and full of lovely birds.

146b-149a. There a pair of curlews, which was lovely, which was afflicted with Cupid's arrows, which was delighted with each other, which was (having) affection for each other, enjoyed. Then, a certain cruel hunter, greedy for eating flesh, came there, and killed one lovely (bird) of the two. Then the female curlew seeing her husband (i.e. her mate) killed by the hunter, became afflicted, and giving out loud cries through grief, lamented.

149b-151a. Then the sage (Vālmīki) who was angry, touching the holy water of the river, cursed the hunter who killed the (male) curlew: "O hunter, since you killed one of the two curlews infatuated by love, you will not attain glory for eternal years."

151b-153a. Then the brāhmaṇas—his followers, thinking that the composition of a verse had taken place, were delighted,

and praising the sage with the words 'Well (done), well (done)', they said: Lord, in the words that rose from the curse Sarasvatī has produced a verse. O best sage, this verse has been an extremely attractive one. O best brāhmaṇa, then the mind of the sage was extremely delighted.

153b-157. At that time, Brahmā having arrived with his sons said (these) wordsto Vālmīki: "O best sage, you are fortunate, (since) Sarasvatī, residing in your mouth, has become a verse. Therefore, compose the lovely Rāmāyaṇa of sweet words, by which your fame will last till the end of the world. Blessed is the speech in (your) mouth which is accompanied by the name of Rāma. Other stories about sensual love of men generate sin only. Therefore, compose the biography of Rāma, well-known in the world, by which the sins of the sinners will perish at (i.e. by means of) every word."

158-162. Saying so the Creator along with other gods disappeared. Then he thought; 'How would Rāmāyaṇa be (composed)?' Then on the charming bank of the river he became engrossed in meditation. Then in his heart appeared the lovely Rāma. Seeing Rāma who was dark like the petals of a blue lotus and whose eyes were like lotuses, and observing his past, future and present deeds, he met with great joy, and composed Rāmāyaṇa full of charming words and many kinds of metres, in which Rāmāyaṇa there are, O sinless one, six very charming divisions. (They are): Bāla, Āraṇyaka, Kiṣkindhā, and Sundara; so also Yuddha and Uttara.

163. O highly intelligent one, a man who listens to these six is freed from (i.e. absolved of) all sins.

164-167. In it, in the Bālakāṇḍa (is the description how) king Daśaratha who was pleased, obtained by performing the sacrifice to obtain a male issue, four sons, actually Viṣṇu, the eternal Brahman. Then (he, i.e. Rāma) goes to Viśvāmitra's sacrifice, marries Sītā, (meets) Paraśurāma, comes (back) to the city (of Ayodhyā), is allotted the position of heir-apparent; (then) at the words of his mother, he, with his wife and Lakṣmaṇa went to the forest after having crossed Gaṅgā, (then) to Citrakūṭa mountain. Having heard that he (lived) in the forest, Bharata, the wise one, went to his brother. Not securing him

(i.e. unable to get him back), he himself lived in Nandigrāma. (This is what) you listen to in the Bāla (kāṇḍa).

168-170. The description in the next takes place in Araṇya (i.e. forest). It describes his residence in the hermitages of the sages. At places there is a minute description. (Then there is the description of) the cutting of Śūrpaṇakhā's nose; (so also is the description of) the destruction of Khara and Dūṣaṇa; (then of) the killing of the illusory (deer) Mārīca; (the description of) the kidnapping of his beautiful wife by the demon (Rāvaṇa); the wandering of him separated (from Sītā) in the forest; (thus) he was endowed with human deeds. (Then follows the description of) his seeing Kabandha there, and his arrival at Pampā; (then is the description of) his meeting with Hanūmat.

171-174. This (kāṇḍa or division where these events are described) is called Vana (or Āraṇya kāṇḍa). O sage, listen to (the description occurring in) the next division. I shall abridge it and tell you (i.e. I shall tell it to you in brief). The breaking of the seven tāla (trees); the wonderful killing of Vālin; giving the kingdom to Sugrīva, and the description of the trees; then the message (i.e. advice) of Lakṣmaṇa about his act (i.e. duty); expulsion of Sugrīva; so also the full description of the army, and search for Sītā; then meeting Sampāti, crossing the ocean, meeting with the monkeys on the other shore. (This is the description that occurs in) the wonderful Kiṣkindhā (kāṇḍa or division).

175-182. Listen to (the description occurring) in the Sundarakāṇḍa where (you find) the wonderful story of Rāma. The error of the monkey of seeing the picture in every house; then (Hanūmat's) seeing Sītā there, and (his) talk with Sītā; breaking of the forest (by Hanūmat); the monkey (i.e. Hanūmat) being bound by the angry (demons); then (the description of) the burning of Laṅkā; then joining the monkeys; then the giving of the token of recognition (given by) Rāma; then the march of the army; then (the description of) constructing a bridge over the ocean; meeting with Śuka and Sāraṇa. (The kāṇḍa which contains) this (description) is called Sundara. In the Yuddha (kāṇḍa, is given the description of) union with Sītā. In the Uttara (kāṇḍa) (is given the description of) the conversation with sages and the commencement of the (horse-) sacrifice. There

are many tales about Rāma, which destroy the sins of the listeners. Thus these are said to be the six Kāṇḍas (i.e. divisions, listening to which) removes the sin of a brāhmaṇa's murder. I have told you in brief (this) very charming (account). That is Rāmāyaṇa destroying great sins, having twentyfour thousand (verses), and marked with (i.e. having) six Kāṇḍas. Having heard it, Rāma was pleased, and putting (i.e. seating) his sons on the seat, and embracing them closely, he remembered (his) dear Sītā.

CHAPTER SIXTYSEVEN

The Commencement of the Sacrifice

Śeṣa said :

1-5. Then Lakṣmaṇa, having come (there) repeatedly saluted her, and with (his voice) faltering through love, he told her the words uttered by Rāma. Having seen Lakṣmaṇa full of modesty to have come (there) and having heard Rāma's message through his mouth, Sītā being abashed, said: "O Lakṣmaṇa, how (i.e. why) have you come? I forsaken by Rāma in the great forest and remembering Rāma, am staying in Vālmīki's hermitage." Having heard the words that came out from her mouth Lakṣmaṇa said: "O mother, O you chaste lady, Rāma is inviting you again and again. A chaste wife does not bring to her mind the fault committed by her husband; therefore, seated in an excellent charriot, come with me."

6-10. Hearing these words Jānakī who looked upon her husband as god, gave up the anger in her heart and sat in the chariot with Lakṣmaṇa. Having saluted all the female ascetics and the sages bright with (the knowledge of) the Vedas, and mentally remembering Rāma, she sat in the chariot and went to the city (of Ayodhyā). She having costly ornaments, reached the city in due course. She reached the river Sarayū where Rāma was waiting. Having got down from the chariot with Lakṣmaṇa, the charming one, devoted to her husband, stuck to (i.e. fell at)

the feet of Rāma. Rāma, having seen that Jānakī, beside herself due to love, (said): "O good lady, I shall complete the sacrifice with you."

11-16. Having saluted Vālmīki and other best brāhmaṇas, she, eager to salute the feet of his mothers, went (to them). Having showered blessings on that dear Jānakī, the mother of the heroes, Kauśalyā became glad in many ways. Kaikeyī, seeing the daughter of the Videha-king bowing at her feet, gave her the blessing: "With your husband and sons live long". Sumitrā, seeing the daughter of the Videha-king bowing at her feet, gave her blessing giving sons and grandsons. O brāhmaṇa, the chaste Sītā, dear to Rāmacandra, having fully saluted them indeed obtained great joy. Seeing the religiously wedded wife of Rāmacandra come there, the Pitcher-born (i.e. Agasti), disregarding the golden (image of Rāma's) wife, placed (in its place) (his) chaste wife.

17-19. In the sacrifice Rāma at that time shone with Sītā, like the Moon having rising lustre in the autumn along with the star (Rohiṇī). With his chaste wife Vaidehī, he performed the sacrifice removing all sins when the lovely time had come. (People) seeing Rāma engaged with Sītā in the sacrifice, were, being full of eagerness, very much delighted.

20-34. At that time of the best sacrifice Rāma said to the intelligent Vasiṣṭha: "O lord, what needful things should be done hereafter?" Hearing Rāma's words the very intelligent preceptor said: "Worship of brāhmaṇas, giving delight to them, should be done. Formerly (king) Marutta[1] made the sacrifice ready with preparations. Then brāhmaṇas were gratified with (gifts of) money etc. The brāhmaṇas were unable to carry large loads of the gifts. The brāhmaṇas unable to carry the loads of gifts threw them in the region of Himavat. Therefore, O foremost king having wealth, O best king, you too give gifts etc. to brāhmaṇas, so that there will be excellent (i.e. great) satisfaction." Hearing this the foremost king, looking upon Agasti as venerable, first worshipped Brahmā's son, the treasure of penance. He worshipped delightful Agastya with his wife by means of many loads of gems and various loads of gold surrounded by (i.e. together with)

1. Marutta—A king of the solar race, who is said to have performed a sacrifice in which the gods took part as waiters.

countries and people giving great delight. In the same way he honoured Satyavatī's son Vyāsa with gems, gold coins, and various countries. He worshipped Cyavana with his wife with good gems. He also honoured all other sages, priests, the treasures of penance, in many ways with heaps of gems and loads of gold. At that time, in the sacrifice Rāma gave large presents to brāhmaṇas. He gave a lakh of gold coins to each brāhmaṇa. He gave various gifts to the helpless, blind and poor with lovely gems given according to their satisfaction. There he gave, as laid down in the sacred texts, variegated garments, soft food, giving joy to all. The city crowded with well-fed and delighted people, grown (more populous) with all beings, surrounded (i.e. crowded) by women became very much delighted. The brāhmaṇa, the pitcher-born sage (i.e. Agasti), seeing him (i.e. Rāma) giving gifts to all, was very much delighted.

35-41. Then he called sixty-four kings with their wives, to bring nectar-like water to bathe (the horse). Rāma with Sītā, adorned with all (kinds of) ornaments went to bring water in a pitcher of a golden colour. Saumitra (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa) also (went) with Urmilā, king Bharata with Māṇḍavī, Śatrughna with Śrutakīrti, and Puṣkala with Kāntimatī. Subāhu (went) with Satyavatī, Satyavat with Vīrabhūṣā, Sumada with Satkīrti, and king Vimala with his queen. King Vīramaṇi went with lovely Śrutavatī, Lakṣmīnidhi with Komalā, Riputāpa with Aṅgasenā, Bibhīṣaṇa with Mahāmūrti, and Pratāpāgrya with Pratītā. Ugrāśva (went) with Kāmagamā, Nīlaratna with Adhiramyā. Suratha (went) with Sumanohārī and the monkey with Mohanā. The sage Vasiṣṭha sent these (and other) kings.

42-44. Vasiṣṭha who knew the sacred hymns, having gone to Sarayū flooded with holy and auspicious water, consecrated the water: "O water, purify this horse with this charming water for the sacrifice of Rāmacandra, the protector of the entire world." All kings like Rāma brought that water touched by the sage to the pavilion praised by best brāhmaṇas.

45-50. The pitcher-born sage (i.e. Agasti) having bathed the horse, white like milk, consecrated him with a hymn through the hands of Rāma: "O great horse, purify me in this crowd of the brāhmaṇas. May all the delighted gods be pleased by your sacrifice." Saying so, king Rāma with Sītā touched him. Then all the

kings through curiosity looked upon it as a wonder. They said to one another: "What does that Rāma by remembering whom men are freed from great sins, say?" When king Rāma spoke like this, the pitcher-born sage (i.e. Agasti), consecrated a sword and gave it into Rāma's hand. When Rāma held and touched the sword, the horse gave up the beast's form and assumed a divine form at the sacrifice.

51-53. Surrounded by celestial nymphs, fanned by chowries, and decorated with a necklace, he got into an excellent divine car. Then all the people seeing him to have given up the horse's form and to have assumed an excellent divine form, were wonder-struck at that sacrifice. Then that very righteous Rāma, knowing it himself, and making the people all around to know it, asked him of a divine form:

54. "Who are you who have obtained a divine form; for what reason are you turned into a horse? How are you accompanied by a divine woman? What do you desire to do? Tell it (to us)." Having heard the words of Rāma, the god said to the king (i.e. Rāma):

55-56. He laughed, and spoke very charming words with a voice resembling that of clouds: "To you who move without and within, there is nothing anywhere that is not known. Yet, I shall tell you who ask me, everything properly.

57-67. O Rāma, O tormentor of enemies, in the former existence I, an exteremely righteous brāhmaṇa, behaved in a manner opposed to the Vedas. Formerly, sometime I went to the bank of Hutapāpā which was charming with trees and lovely everywhere. O you of mighty arms, having bathed there and gratified the dead ancestors, having duly given gifts, I took to meditation upon you (in a manner) acceptable to the Vedas. O King, at that time many kings had come there. To deceive them, I practised this religious hypocrisy. An excellent enclosed place was fixed with the preparations for many sacrifices. That charming and big place was covered with garments and had wooden rings on the tops of sacrificial posts. The smoke rising from the sacrificial fire and having a wonderful form, made the wide firmament charming and matchless. I whose body was beautified with many beautiful marks, whose penance was great, who was adorned with darbhas, who had the sacred fuel in his

hands, was indeed religious hypocrisy in an embodied form. (At that time) Durvāsas, of a great lustre, roaming at will over the world, came there on the bank of the river Dhūtapāpā. Before him he saw me practising religious hypocrisy, observing silence, not offering him materials of worship, arrogant, and not uttering words of welcome. Seeing (me), the very intelligent sage, overpowered with anger like the ocean on a parvan-day, cursed me, a religious hypocrite: 'O you of a wicked mind, O you mean ascetic, since you are practising religious hypocrisy on the bank of the river, obtain beasthood (i.e. be born as a beast) which is fully censurable'.

68-74. Having heard that curse given (by him), I became extremely distressed at that time; and I indeed seized the feet of that sage Durvāsas. Then, O Rāma, the brāhmaṇa showed me an excellent favour. (He said:) 'O ascetic, be a horse at the sacrifice of the king of kings. Then, due to contact with his (i.e. Rāma's) hand, go, after taking up a divine, charming form, free from religious hypocrisy, to that highest position.' Even that curse given by him became favourable to me, since I obtained the lovely touch of your hand. O Rāma, I have obtained the touch of your hand, difficult to be obtained, which was difficult to be had by gods etc. even after many births. O great king, give me an order. Through your favour I shall reach that great, eternal place of you, which is free from misery etc. O king, O lord of men, through your favour I shall go to that place where there is no grief, no old age, no death, no confusion about time."

75-83. Saying so to him and turning round, he got into that excellent divine, car decked with jewels, and very much honoured by all gods. By the grace of Rāma's feet he went to an eternal place, free from re-birth, and bereft of grief and delusion. Having heard what he had told, the other people knew Rāma (properly), and mad with joy they were amazed. O brāhmaṇa, O you very intelligent one, even if Viṣṇu is remembered with religious hypocrisy it gives salvation. Then what (will happen) by avoiding religious hypocrisy! Somehow or other Rāma should be much remembered, by which a man obtains the highest position, difficult to be obtained (even) by gods etc. The sages having seen that wonder regarded themselves blessed. When the god

who formerly had a horse's form, went to heaven, Rāma said to the treasures of penance and the best among those who know the Vedas: "O brāhmaṇa(s), what should I do? The horse is lost; he has obtained happiness. How will the sacrifice, gratifying all deities, will (now) proceed? May the sages do that by which the gods would be gratified, my sacrifice will be excellent, and I would have what is told by the sacred rules."

84-87. Hearing these words, the best sage Vasiṣṭha, skilled in knowing the hearts of all sages, said: "Quickly bring camphor, due to which gods having first received oblation, will now accept it, after being impelled by my words." Hearing these words Rāma quickly brought very shining camphor for pleasing the gods very much. Then the sage, with his heart very much delighted, invoked the wonderful gods. All of them surrounded by their attendants, came that moment only.

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PART VI

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

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PREFACE

This forty-fourth volume in the series of *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* comprises the sixth part of the Padma-Purāṇa containing the remaining chapters (68-117) of the fifth section of the Purāṇa, viz. *Pātālakhaṇḍa.*

Like the foregoing parts this part also contains a number of interesting topics and a good variety of fascinating stories and anecdotes characterized by fine dramatic qualities and poetical fancy and flavour. The most dominating themes are the worship of god Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu and the importance of the month of Vaiśākha for Viṣṇu worship, and the worship of Śiva and his Phallus, and the efficacy of sacred ash therein. Some striking observations of the Purāṇa in this part are noted here.

Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Being and the three gods of the Trinity are equal to a croreth of a croreth (i.e. insignificant) part of his feet.

The purification of Viṣṇu's devotees is accomplished in twelve ways, viz. purification of the feet by going round the idol with devotion etc., purification of the hands by taking leaves and flowers etc. for his worship, purification of speech by describing his virtues etc., that of ears and eyes by listening to stories of Kṛṣṇa, witnessing his festival etc., and of the head, of the heart, of the nose and so on in ways described in ch. 78.

Worship of Kṛṣṇa is of five kinds, viz. *Abhigamana*, *Upādāna*, *Yoga*, *Svādhyāya* and *Ijyā* as explained in ch. 78.

Thirty-two offences against Viṣṇu such as going to the Lord's temple in vehicles, drinking spirituous liquor etc. are described in ch. 79.

Five sacred rites are prescribed for a devotee of Viṣṇu, such as marking the body with a mark of conch etc.

While the first three castes should worship in the manner laid down in the scriptures, women and śūdras who are exempted from this should propitiate Viṣṇu by uttering his name.

In addition to the common flowers used in worship to please

Viṣṇu eight internal flowers are described in ch. 84, such as harmlessness, control of senses etc. A few external flowers are also mentioned.

Devotion is said to be of various kinds in ch. 85, viz. (1) mental, (2) of speech, and (3) of body; and again (1) secular, (2) Vedic, and (3) spiritual.

The name of Gaṅgā is said to be very efficacious in destroying sins. If a man at a distance of thousands of yojanas remembers Gaṅgā, he, even though a sinner, obtains the highest position.

Five kinds of sons are described in chapters 87-88.

In ch. 90 beauty, good character, truthfulness, nobleness, religious merit, sweetness, internal and external purity, devotion to husband, service to him, patience and affection have been called the eleven ornaments of a woman.

In ch. 94 it is said that there is no other worthy recipient than Brāhmaṇas; there is no god higher than Viṣṇu; no holy place like Gaṅgā; no prayer like Gāyatrī, no vow like that of Dvādaśī, no friend like wife; no virtue like compassion; no happiness like freedom; no āśrama like that of a householder; no better conduct than truthfulness; no greater pleasure than contentment; and no better month than Vaiśākha.

In ch. 96 among those who go to hell are included those who look upon Brahmā, Śaṅkara and Viṣṇu as different from one another, those who cause obstruction when wealth is being given to Brāhmaṇas, who are sceptic and atheists, who torment their wives, who feed their own belly, are gluttons, break a family, cut off the bond of love and who test the Brāhmaṇas. Of all pious acts giving gifts alone is considered the greatest and no gift is said to be equal to that of food, water or a cow.

In ch. 98 it is said that there is an expiation for a very great sinner, a rogue or a malevolent one but there is no expiation for an ungrateful person.

In ch. 105 the application of bhasma (sacred ash) on various parts of the body is praised as most efficacious in destroying the sins committed by those parts, and besmearing the forehead with ash is said to destroy the writing of Yama as fire destroys a writing on a tablet.

In ch. 114 it is said that in Kṛtayuga meditation alone is the best, in Tretā sacrifice is the best, in Dvāpara worship is the

best, while in Kaliyuga charity and recital of Viṣṇu's name are the best.

In ch. 117 it is declared that no benefit comes from worship which is performed with stolen or unjustly procured material.

In ch. 116 the story of an ancient Rāmāyaṇa is narrated which differs from the familiar one by sage Vālmīki in some minor points. Daśaratha is said to have four queens instead of three, viz. Kauśalyā, Sumitrā, Surūpā and Suveṣā; Rāma's army crosses the ocean with the help of Śiva's bow named Ājigava; Rāvaṇa is the first to be killed by Rāma followed by the killing of Kumbhakarṇa. In this so-called ancient version supposed to have been composed much before the time of the historical Rāma many dramatic episodes including those connected with Viśvāmitra's hermitage, the bringing of Sañjīvanī by Hanumān, the abandonment of Sītā etc. are missing.

In ch. 115 thirty-six Purāṇas—18 major and 18 minor ones—have been listed in the following order: Brāhma, Pādma, Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, Bhāgavata, Bhaviṣya, Nāradīya, Mārkaṇḍeya, Āgneya, Brahmavaivarta, Laiṅga, Vāmana, Skānda, Mātsya, Kaurma, Vārāha, Gāruḍa and Brahmāṇḍa (*major*); and Sanatkumāra, Nārasiṁha, Māṇḍa, Daurvāsasa, Nāradīya, Kāpila, Mānava, Auśanasa, Brahmāṇḍa, Vāruna, Kālikā, Māheśa, Sāmba, Saura, Pārāśara, Mārīca, Bhārgava and Kaumāra (*upapurāṇas*: *minor ones*). There is duplication of two, viz. Nāradīya and Brahmāṇḍa without any explanation on the part of the author.

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—*Editor*

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ABBREVIATIONS

Common and self-evident abbreviations such as Ch(s)—Chapter(s), p—page, pp—pages, v—verse, vv—verses, Ftn—Footnote, Hist. Ind. Philo.—History of Indian Philosophy are not included in this list.

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona
AGP	S.M. Ali's *The Geography of Purāṇas*, PPH, New Delhi, 1973
AIHT	*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F. E. Pargiter, Motilal Banarsidass (MLBD), Delhi
AITM	*Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* Series, MLBD, Delhi
AP	*Agni Purāṇa*, Guru Maṇḍal Edition (GM), Calcutta, 1957
Arch. S.Rep.	Archaeological Survey Report
AV	*Atharva Veda*, Svādhyāya Manḍal, Aundh
Bd. P.	*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, MLBD, Delhi 1973
BG	*Bhagavadgītā*
Bh. P.	*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad
Br.	*Brāhmaṇa* (preceded by name such as Śatapatha)
BS. P.	*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Vishnu Shastri Bapat, Wai
BV. P.	*Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*, GM, 1955-57
CC	*Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi* by Hemādri
CVS	*Caraṇa Vyūha Sūtra* by Śaunaka, Com. by Mahidāsa
DB	*Devī Bhāgavata*, GM, 1960-61
De or GDAMI	*The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, N.L. De, Oriental Reprint, Delhi, 1971
Dh. S.	*Dharma Sūtra* (preceded by the author's name such as Gautama)
ERE	*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* by Hastings
GP	*Garuḍa Purāṇa*, ed. R. S. Bhattacharya, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1964

GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P.V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varanasi, 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇi*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	Monier Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	*Nāradīya* or *Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣīya Prācīna Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd. P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English version, MLBD, Delhi, 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, R. C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Śat. Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā* by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

CHAPTER SIXTYEIGHT

The Horse Sacrifice Ends

Śeṣa said:

1-6. Indra together with the gods tasting at the sacrifice the oblations cooked and seen by Rāmacandra, did not obtain satisfaction. Viṣṇu, Śiva, so also Brahmā having four faces, Varuṇa, Kubera and other gods tasted the oblations refined by Vasiṣṭha. The best brāhmaṇas also were as it were oppressed with hunger after taking the food. The treasure of pity (i.e. Rāma), having gratified all gods with the oblations, and being urged on by Vasiṣṭha, did what was necessary to be done according to the rules. The brāhmaṇas were pleased with the gifts; the great gods were pleased with the oblations. All being gratified on receiving their portions, went home. To the priests headed by the hotṛ (i.e. the priest reciting the prayers of the Ṛgveda at the sacrifice) he gave kingdoms in the four directions. Those brāhmaṇas who were pleased, gave blessings to Rāma in an auspicious manner.

7-18. Then having offered the full oblation, Vasiṣṭha said to the good ladies: "You should felicitate the king who has completed the sacrifice." Hearing those words, those ladies gladly scattered parched grains over Rāma who had vanquished Cupid by means of his handsomeness and was adorned with great gems. Surrounded by crores of kings going on foot, he went to the best river surrounded by groups of birds. As the lord of stars with his lustre going up and being surrounded by his wives, shines, in the same way Rāma surrounded by hosts of kings shone. Coming to know about that great festival, all people were hurrying and their eyes had become steady after seeing the face of the husband of Sītā. The people, seeing the lord of kings going with Sītā to the river and having desired since long to see (Rāma) were delighted. Many actors and singers, singing the bright glory (of Rāma), followed the lord of the earth saluted by the entire world. The female dancers, dancing there and disturbing the minds of their husbands, and sprinkling (water) over them with syringes, went to serve Rāma.

Smearing the great king with turmeric and saffron and smearing one another, they obtained highest joy. They, with necklaces of pearls put on the pairs of their breasts and marked with ear-rings of gold, touching the pairs of their ears, went along the path crowded with men and women. They duly reached the river flooded with auspicious and holy water.

19-24. Having gone there, Rāma with Sītā followed by Vasiṣṭha and others entered the holy water. All the kings and the people entered after him. With lovely syringes they sprinkled the water purified by the dust of his feet and saluted by the entire world over one another. All with very red eyes enjoyed more than they expected. That righteous Rāma, having sported for a long time along with Sītā with the waves in the flood of that auspicious water, again went out (of the river). The king having put on a silken garment, having (worn) a crown and ear-rings, having excellent bracelets with the beauty of armlets, having the charm of a crore of Cupids, and being praised by best kings, shone. The noble-minded king, having fixed the sacrificial post adorned with excellent colours on the bank of the river, obtained the wonderful glory in the three worlds, which was not easily obtained by other kings.

25. Thus, along with the daughter of king Janaka he, performing three horse-sacrifices, obtained matchless fame in the three worlds very difficult to be obtained even by gods.

26-38. O dear one, I who was asked (by you), have described (to you) the good story of Rāma. I have described the sacrifice in detail. O brāhmaṇa, what do you ask again? He who, through devotion for Viṣṇu, hears the (description of) the good sacrifice of Rāma, would, after having crossed (i.e. overcome) the sin of killing a brāhmaṇa, obtain the eternal Brahman. A sonless man would obtain sons; a poor man would obtain wealth; a person suffering from a disease gets rid of it; one that is bound gets free from bondage. Hearing Rāma's story even a wicked cāṇḍāla obtains the highest position. What to say of the best brāhmaṇa, solely intent on devotion! By remembering Rāma sinners would obtain the highest position, the highest heaven difficult to be obtained by gods like Indra. Those men who remember the best of the Raghus, are blessed.

In a moment they, having crossed the mundane existence, go to inexhaustible happiness. Every letter (of the story of Rāma) is a wild fire burning the bamboo in the form of a brāhmaṇa's murder. One should worship that teacher who makes one hear (i.e. recites to one) that. Having heard the story, one should give the reader along with his wife a couple of cows after having honoured him with garments, ornaments and food. O best brāhmaṇa, having fashioned charming, excellent, golden images of Rāma and Sītā shining with ear-rings and adorned with rings, they should be presented to a brāhmaṇa only. His deities and dead ancestors would then reach Viṣṇu's heaven only. You formerly asked me about Rāma's story. I told it to you. O brāhmaṇa, what else should I tell you, the intelligent one. Those who listen to this story, destroying the heap of (sins due to) brāhmaṇa-murders, go to the highest position, very difficult to be obtained by gods. There is no scope for doubt here that he who kills a cow or his son, or he who drinks liquor, or who violates his teacher's bed (i.e. his wife), becomes purified in a moment.

CHAPTER SIXTYNINE

The Story of Kṛṣṇa Begins

The sages said:

1. O glorious one, we have duly heard from you the (description of) Rāma's horse-sacrifice. Now tell us the greatness (i.e. glory) of noble Śrīkṛṣṇa.

Sūta said:

2-3. O best sages, (please) listen to the nectar-like story of Śrīkṛṣṇa. I shall tell you what Pārvatī asked the lord of beings. Once goddess Pārvatī with her mind affectionate towards Śiva, having saluted him with reverence, said these words to him:

Pārvatī said:

4-5. The place of Viṣṇu staying without and within the crores of universes, is beyond them, is the chief one, the best one, and excellent. There is no place superior to the one which is Kṛṣṇa's charming place, dear to him. O great lord, I desire to hear it all. (Please) tell it.

The lord said:

6-15a. The highest, excellent secret place dear (to Viṣṇu) is more secret than a secret place, is holy, is very wonderful, and gives great joy. O goddess, it is great, very difficult to reach among all the places that are difficult to reach; it is full of all power, and is concealed among all places. This place of Viṣṇu is the chief among the places of the Sātvatas, is extremely difficult to reach, is eternal, is called Vṛndāvana, and is situated above the universe. It is the complete Brahman, happiness and glory, is eternal, is bliss, and is imperishable. Vaikuṇṭha is a part of its portion; on the earth there is Vṛndāvana itself. Whatever is the glory of Goloka is settled in Gokula. Whatever glory is (found) in Vaikuṇṭha is settled in Dvārakā. Whatever is the glory of that highest Brahman, it always resorts to Vṛndāvana. In the forest Kṛṣṇa's abode is especially great among them. Since that which is named Māthuraka is solely dear to Viṣṇu, therefore in the three worlds the earth is blessed. His own abode, named the region of Māthura, is superior; it is a concealed, multiform place, situated within a city. The Māthura region is of the form of a thousand-petalled lotus. Due to the roaming about of Viṣṇu's disc, the wonderful abode of Viṣṇu (has come about). Its pericarp and petals are extensive, and has sprung up with secret trees.

15b-23a. The twelve groves are important. In the order of importance they are: Bhadra, Śrī, Loha, Bhāṇḍira, Mahā, Tāla, Khadīraka, Bakula, Kumuda, Kāmya, Madhu(vana) and Vṛndāvana. They are twelve in number. Seven of them are (situated) in the west of Kālindī. The five on the east are (together) called Pañcavana (i.e. the five groves). There is a great, secret grove called Gokula and also Madhu(vana)-Vṛndāvana. This latter is

called the place of Kṛṣṇa's sport-delight. (Then there are:) Kadamba, Khaṇḍana, Nandavana, Nandiśvara, Nandanandana-khaṇḍa, Palāśa, Aśoka, Ketakī, Sugandhamānasa, Kaila, Amṛta, the place of his eating (food); Sukhaprasādhana, Vatsaharaṇa, Śeṣaśāyika; the village Śyāmapūrvodadhi, so also the city Cakra-bhānu; Saṁketa, Dvipada, dusty due to the sports of children; Kāmadruma, Sulalita and the grove Utsuka. It is a place of the enjoyment of pastimes of various kinds, so also of the enjoyment of many sports; Nāgavistāraviṣṭambha (literally, stopping of the expanse of the serpent), and having secret trees growing in it.

23b-51. The great place called Gokula is the thousand-petalled lotus. The great place in it, its pericarp, is the excellent abode of Govinda on a golden seat and is adorned with a golden pavilion. The petals have sprung up in (i.e. from) the pericarp in due order in the (main) directions and intermediate directions. The petal which is said (to be situated) in the south is the best and the best among the best (i.e. most) secret places. In that petal is a great seat inaccessible to the Vedic and sacred texts. It is difficult to obtain even for the lords of the meditating saints, is the soul of all, and is Gokula. In the south-east there is the second petal, a secret petal. It is Saṁketa, Dvipada; in that region two huts are situated. In the east there is the third petal, an excellent and chief place. It is said to be hundred times more meritorious than the contact with all holy places like Gaṅgā. In the north-east is the fourth petal, and the place is on the seat of the inspired sages. A cowherdess would obtain Kṛṣṇa as her husband at that place due to her worshipping Kātyāyana. It is said that snatching off of the garments and ornaments (of the cowherdesses) took place there. In the north is said (to exist) the fifth petal, the best of all petals. Here itself is the petal resembling Karṇikā (literally, the pericarp), called Dvādaśāditya (i.e. having twelve suns). In the north-west is the sixth petal. Kālīhrada is said (to be situated) there. It is said to be the best of the best petals, and the chief place. In the west is said (to exist) the seventh petal, the best of all petals. It gives the desired boons to the groups of the wives of Viṣṇu. Here even a demon obtained salvation difficult to be obtained by gods. Here only is the petal called Brahmadala deluding

Brahmā. In the south-east is said (to exist) the eighth petal (called) Vyomaghātana. The killing of Śaṅkhacūḍa took place there. It is the place of the enjoyment of many sports. The eighth petal is well-known, and is said to be situated within the Vṛndāvana-forest. The glorious Vṛndāvana is on the south of Yamunā. There is seen the place of Śiva-phallus, called Gopīśvara. Outside it is the sixteenth petal, glorious and full of beauty, which, due to going round it in order, is said (to exist) in all directions. It is a great place, a great abode, named Svadhāmādhava. The first petal is the greatest, and its greatness is like Karṇikā (the pericarp). There is the Karṇikā on the Govardhana mountain which is lovely and is ever the abode of pleasure, is a grove full of great sports where Kṛṣṇa would be the lord of the Nityavṛndākānana. Kṛṣṇa became (there) a cowkeeper. What is the use of further talking much? The third petal is called Sarvaśreṣthottamottama. The fourth petal is called Mahādbhutarasasthala. There is the beautiful grove (called) Nandīśvara, and there is said (to exist) abode of Nanda. The fifth petal is called Karṇikādalamāhātmya. Here Gopāla (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) engaged in tending the cows, dwells. There, which is said to be the sixth petal, is said (to exist) Nandavana. The seventh lovely petal is called Bakulāraṇya. The eighth is Tālavana where the cows were killed. The ninth charming petal is called Kumudāraṇya. The tenth (called) Kāmāraṇya is the chief and the cause of all. There is Brahmaprasādhana (lit. decoration of Brahmā), and the manifestation of the disguise of Viṣṇu. It is the place of the pleasures of (i.e. due to) Kṛṣṇa's sports, and is said to be preeminent. The eleventh petal is called Bhaktānugrahakāraṇa. A bridge is constructed here; and the place is full of many groves. The twelfth lovely and charming petal is Bhāṇḍīra; there Kṛṣṇa was engaged in sports and was surrounded by Śrīdāman etc. The thirteenth best petal is known as Bhadravara. The fourteenth petal is called Sarvasiddhipradasthala. There is Śrīvana, which is charming, and is the cause of all splendour; it has a part of Kṛṣṇa's sports and enhances glory, beauty and fame. The fifteenth excellent petal is known as Lohavana. The petal resembling Karṇikā is said to be the sixteenth petal.

52-55. There is said to be a secret, excellent, great grove. (Kṛṣṇa) surrounded by keepers of calves (i.e. young cowherds) is engaged in child-sports. The murder of Pūtanā etc. and the breaking of twin Arjuna trees (took place) there. The young Gopāla, five years old, the ocean of love, joy and pleasure, and called Dāmodara, lives there. This is said to be a well-known petal, and best and excellent of all petals. The sport of Kṛṣṇa (takes place here). It is called Kiñjalkīvihāradala. It is also called Siddhapradhānakiñjalka.

Pārvatī said:

56. I desire to hear the importance and the wonderful secret of Vṛndāraṇya. O great lord, narrate it.

The lord said:

57-59. O most beloved one, I have told you the best, greatest mystery, the secret of secrets, and the rare of the rare. O goddess, it is watched over in the three worlds, and well-honoured by the lord of gods. It is desired by Brahmā and others; the place is resorted to by gods and inspired sages. The best among the meditating saints are devotedly always intent upon meditation on it only. There is the continuous singing and dancing of gandharvas and celestial damsels.

60-69. The glorious Vṛndāvana is charming and is an abode of complete joy and pleasure. There are many desire-yielding gems; and the water is full of the taste of nectar. The big tree there is surrounded by Kadamba trees. There is the lady Lakṣmī, the man Viṣṇu, produced from the tenth part of it. There (one sees) Kṛṣṇa, of the age of a boy, always of a joyful figure, walking dramatically, with a face having continuous sweet but indistinct talk, with the forest resorted to by devotees of Viṣṇu, of a pure nature, and full of love, engaged in the joy of the complete Brahman, full of the thoughts about him; being inspired by his image; (the forest was) charming due to the sweet notes and humming of the intoxicated cuckoos and bees, having the music of pigeons and parrots, with thousands of intoxicated bees, rich with the dance of the enemies of serpents (i.e. peacocks), full

of all amorous joyful sports; it was full of the pollen of flowers of various colours; it had the full moon always rising, and served with the sun having cold rays; it was without misery, free from grief, and old age and death. It was free from anger, free from jealousy, unbroken (i.e. complete) and without ego; it had the nectar of full joy; it was the ocean of full love and happiness. The great abode was beyond (all) qualities and was of the nature of full love, where due to horripilation tears were shed by trees etc.; then what can be said about Viṣṇu's devotees having consciousness! It was Vṛndāvana on the earth due to the constant contact with the dust of Kṛṣṇa's feet.

70-78. The Vṛndāvana is the seed-vessel of the lotus having a thousand petals, by the touch of which the earth is blessed in the three worlds. On the earth Vṛndāvana is a greater secret than a secret (i.e. the greatest secret) and a charming (place). It is an inexhaustible, unchangeable abode of Govinda, containing greatest joy. It is non-different from Govinda's body, and is the abode of the joy of (reaching) the complete Brahman. There salvation is had by the touch of the dust(-particles). What can be said about its importance? Therefore, O queen, by all means, keep in mind that forest. In the Vṛndāvana parks, (one sees) Kṛṣna having a boy's body. Kālindī went round its pericarp. The water of Kālindī is pleasant due to sports, is deep, and attractive due to fragrance; it was mixed with the nectar of joy; it is the dense place of honey; it is bright with many colours due to flowers like lotuses and blue lotuses. The water is lovely; it looks beautiful with birds like the ruddy geese with various sweet and indistinct notes; it is very lovely due to the waves. On both of its sides (there is a pericarp) which is lovely and fashioned with pure gold, said to be a crore times more meritorious than Gaṅgā (Gaṅgākoṭiguṇa). In the pericarp (Karṇikā) there is the Koṭiguṇa where Kṛṣna is engaged in sports. Kālindī, Karṇikā and Kṛṣṇa are not different from one another. They (just) have one body.

Pārvatī said:

79. O you not having a beautiful body, I desire to listen to the wonders of Govinda. O you treasure of compassion, tell (them to me).

The lord said:

80-107. In Vṛndāvana adorned with lovely sprouts and beautified with the foliage of the branches of good trees extending over a yojana, in a charming abode there is a very bright seat for abstract meditation. It is fashioned with eight angles and is charming due to various lustres. On it is an auspicious throne (decked) with rubies. There is an eight-petalled lotus lying comfortably in the pericarp. It is the great abode of Govinda. How can its greatness be described? A man should meditate upon Kṛṣṇa who is served by the group of cowherdesses remaining in (i.e. following) the advice of Govinda (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) who has the (proper) age and form for the divine station of the cowherds, who is the lord of Vṛndāvana, who is the chief of the station of the cowherds, who always has splendour, who alone is dear to the children of the station of the cowherds, whose childhood has broken into youth due to age, whose body is wonderful, who is without a beginning but is the origin of all, who is the dear son of the cowherd Nanda, who is to be sought after through the sacred texts, who is unborn, who is always charming to the cowherdesses, who is the highest abode, who is the highest form, who has two arms, who is the lord of the station of the cowherdesses, who is the son of a cowherdess, who is the only cause of the qualityless (Brahman), who is very glorious, who is fresh and pure, who has a dark lustre, who is charming, who is much glistening like the row of fresh clouds, who is pleasing to touch due to his great loveliness like a fully opened blue lotus, who gives comfort, who is glossy like the heap of collyrium that is expanded and is dark and attractive, whose entire (set of) hair is very glossy, dark, curly and fragrant, who is charming due to the dark lock of hair and the right part over it, who is bright on account of many colours and adorned with bright feathers of peacocks, who has on his crest a charming string of mandāra (flowers), who has put on lovely ornaments, who is at times adorned with a crown made with a multitude of big leaves, who at times has the ornament of a crown made with many gems and rubies, who is covered with unsteady hair, whose face is like a crore of bright moons, who has put on (his forehead) the mark of musk, who has been (smeared) with bright,

charming yellow pigment made from the urine or bile of a cow, whose eyes are long like very long petals, having the beauty of fully opened blue lotuses, in whose smile the creeper-like eyebrows dance (i.e. move) closely, and the sight is (i.e. the eyes are) charming, the tip of whose nose is charming on account of its beauty due to its being very beautiful and rising, who entices the three worlds with the rays of the pearls supposed to be found in the projection on the foreheads of elephants on the tip of his nose, who is lovely on account of his red and glossy lower lip resembling red lead, who puts on ear-rings resembling the shape of crocodiles and made of pure bright gold and of many colours, and the good cheeks of whom have the resemblance with mirrors due to the heap of rays of (i.e. shooting from) them (i.e. the ear-rings), on whose ears are placed mandāra and lotuses and who is well-adorned with chaplets of the shape of crocodiles, who has on his chest the (mark of) Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha, whose neck shines with a necklace of pearls, round whose arm are the bracelets and armlets with divine rubies shining and mixed with lovely gold, whose waist is adorned with small bells, whose beautiful feet are adorned with the beauty of sweet(-jingling) anklets, (on whose body) sandal etc. looks bright with camphor, agaru (sandal) and musk, who is painted with divine fragrant unguents mixed with a bright yellow pigment made from cow's urine or bile, who is shining with soft, yellow garment and with whose feet the collyrium is disturbed, whose lotus-like navel is deep, whose chaplet is depressed in the line of hair, whose pair of knees is quite round, who is lovely due to his lotus-like feet, whose palms and soles are adorned with (signs of) flag, diamond, gold and lotus, who having the row of rays shooting from his nails is the only cause of the complete Brahman. Some say that the unique supreme spirit, Brahman, is his portion; the wise ones say that Mahāviṣṇu is his tenth part; that one alone, who has three modes and who is fashioned with the essence of (materials required to) fashion all good things, is thought of in their hearts by the best meditating saints like Sanaka, who is lovely (as he has) vanquished innumerable crores of Cupids due to his neck that is turned (to a side), whose golden ear-rings shine when he has put his fine

cheek on his left shoulder, whose smile is accompanied by a side-glance, who deludes the three worlds with the sweet, indistinct notes of his flute put between the contracted lips, who is drowned in the ocean of love.

Pārvatī said:

108-115. O lord, tell me everything about the highest cause Kṛṣṇa, the highest position called Kṛṣṇa, the lord of Vṛndāvana, the eternal one, and the only cause of the qualityless (Brahman); tell me the importance of each secret, about the lovely wonder. O lord of lords, I desire to hear it.

The lord said:

O goddess, how much can be said about the greatness of him, the knowledge of whose moon-like rays cannot be had? Listen joyfully. In the innumerable crores of the universes, in the rise of the infinite (Prakṛti) with three constituents, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva are equal to the parts of the measure of a croreth of a croreth of his feet. (These) arising from him are endowed with creation, maintenance, and destruction. The bodies of Cupid are the parts equal to the portion of a croreth of a croreth of his form. Born of his aṇḍāntara(?) they entice the world. Brahmā is (made of) a part equal to a croreth of a croreth of the lustre shining in his body. The forms of the sun are the partial rays equal to a croreth of a croreth of his light. Those of the form of rays which are a croreth of a croreth of his portion live due to rays of his body which are the nectar of great joy, which are of the nature of highest bliss and intelligence, and which are the only cause of the qualityless Brahman.

116-118. They say that the lustres of the gem-like (crescent) moon(-shaped) nails of his two feet are even the cause of the complete Brahman, difficult to be understood by the Vedas. (The fragrance) enticing the universe is but a part which cannot be measured (i.e. is negligible) of his fragrance; and the various fragrances are produced from the fragrance etc. of the flowers touched by him. The first (primordial) matter is Rādhikā, dear to Kṛṣṇa. Durgā and others having the three constituents are a

part equal to a croreth of croreth portion of her. The excellent Viṣṇu is produced from the touch of the dust of her feet.

CHAPTER SEVENTY

A Description of Śrīkṛṣṇa

Pārvatī said:

1. O lord, I desire to hear (the account worth) hearing of him and about those who are the members of his assembly. O you treasure of kindness, (please) narrate it.

The lord said:

2-7. (One can see) Govinda along with Rādhā seated on a golden throne. He has the loveliness of form as described before. His ornaments, garments and garland are divine. He, in his crooked posture (assumed with his body bent at three points while playing on his flute) is sweet and very glossy and is the pupil of the eyes of the cowherdesses. Outside sitting on the seat for abstract meditation (Yogapīṭha) covered with a golden sheet resembling a lion's skin(?) are the chief ladies dear to Kṛṣṇa and having a strong devotion for him in every limb (of their bodies). They are Lalitā and others, and are the portions of the primordial matter. Rādhikā is the primordial matter. In front of him is goddess Lalitā; in the north-west is Śrīharipriyā; in the east is Viśākhā; and after her, in the south-east is Śaibyā; Padmā is in the south; and then in the south-west, on the Yogapīṭha, in front of a bakula tree, is Candrāvatī, dear to him. Thus they remain in order. These eight are auspicious and chief natural forms, dear to Kṛṣṇa.

8-13. The chief form is Rādhā who is similar to Candrāvatī. Candrāvalī, Citrarekhā, Candrā, Madanasundarī, Priyā, Śrī, Madhumatī, Candrarekhā, Haripriyā—these are the sixteen original natural forms dear to Kṛṣṇa. At Vṛndāvana Rādhā is the (chief) goddess, so also Candrāvatī dear (to Kṛṣṇa). In front

are thousands of cowherdesses having identical virtues and beauty and charming eyes. They are lovely, are dressed attractively, are young and bright. They resemble the mass of pure gold, are very much pleased, and have lovely eyes; his form has got into their hearts, eager for his embrace; they have plunged themselves into the nectar of Kṛṣṇa; in their minds thoughts about him flash; they have dedicated their hearts to the lotus-like feet of Kṛṣṇa, worshipped by their lotus-like eyes.

14-26. On the right are Śrutikanyās, gathered in thousands and myriads, having forms which have infatuated the world, having in their minds a longing for Kṛṣṇa; they have enticed the three worlds with many natural sounds; there they, overcome with love, sing the concealed (i.e. great) secrets; on the left are divine damsels, with divine dresses and splendid with love; they are proficient in many skills, and are full of many divine sentiments. They are endowed with excellence of beauty and are very attractive due to their glances; they, not being ashamed of Govinda, are eager for the touch of his body. Their minds are merged in devotion to him. They look with a smile and obliquely. Then outside the temple, clearly filled with his beloveds, (there are ladies) of a similar dress and age, of a similar might and valour, of similar virtues and deeds, to whom similar ornaments are dear. They are engaged in singing songs of similar notes and playing upon similar lutes. At the western door is Śrīdāmā; similarly at the northern (door) is Vasudāmā; in the same way, Sudāmā is at the eastern door and Kiṅkiṇī at the southern door. Outside it on the golden seat, surrounded by a golden temple, on another golden altar, adorned with golden ornaments (one can see) little Kṛṣṇa, surrounded by myriads and myriads of cowherds like Subhadra, having horns, lutes, flutes, canes and having (similar) age, dresses, forms and voice, and being overcome (with sentiments) and meditating upon his virtues, singing (his praise), drawn in pictures of wonderful forms, always shedding tears of joy, with their entire bodies full of horripilation, steady like best meditating saints; with trickling aloe-wood (paste), (he is also) surrounded by innumerable cowkeepers; outside it, on a golden rampart, bright with a crore of suns, and stupefied with sweet fragrance, is a great park

(spreading) in (all) four directions and having a glorious Pārijāta tree in the west.

27-31. Below it (is) a divine golden seat, decorated with gold; on it (is) a divine throne, decked with gems and rubies. On it (one can see), Vāsudeva, the lord of the world, who is the highest joy, who is beyond the three guṇas and of the nature of intelligence, who is the cause of all causes, who is dark like a sapphire and a cloud, whose dark hair is curly, whose eyes are broad like a lotus-petal, who has put on ear-rings of the shape of a crocodile, who has four hands, whose weapons are the disc, sword, mace, conch and lotus, who is without a beginning or an end, who is eternal, who is the chief, the Supreme Being, who is of the form of light, who is the great and ancient abode, who puts on the garland of wood-flowers, who has put on a yellow garment, who is glossy, who is adorned with divine ornaments, who has smeared himself with divine unguent, who is charming due to his lustrous body.

32-37. Then (one can) also (see) the eight ladies dear to Vāsudeva: Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā, Nāgnajitī, Sulakṣaṇā, Mitravindā, Anuvindā, Sunandā, and Jāmbavatī dear to him, and also Suśīlā. They are bright, are surrounded by their retinue, and are intent on devotion. In the north (is) a very great park, having the yellow sandal tree; below it (is) a golden seat decorated with a jewelled pavilion in it on a petal fashioned with gold; on a bright throne (one can see) Saṅkarṣaṇa i.e. Balarāma, with Revatī; he is very dear to the lord, and not having different virtues and form; he is like a pure crystal; his eyes are like red lotuses; he has put on a blue strap, is glossy, and has put on divine ornaments, garlands and garments; he is always addicted to drinking liquor with his eyes red due to (drinking) liquor.

38-42a. In the best region in the south, remaining in the interior of the lovely navel, at the root of the Santāna tree, there is the embellishment of a jewelled temple. In it on a bright divine throne decked with gems and rubies, one (goddess) attends upon god Pradyumna seated upon it. He is full of the charm of the row of the essences of beauty deluding the world. He resembles a heap of dark lotuses; his eyes are like the petals of lotuses; he is (adorned with) divine ornaments and decorations and

(with) smearing of divine sandal; his wonderful body has the full beauty which has infatuated the world.

42b-52a. In the eastern park in the great forest, resorted to by divine trees, below there, is a golden seat adorned with a golden pavilion. On it on a shining, divine, bright throne (one can see) glorious Aniruddha with Uṣā; he is the lord of the world; he is dark like a dense cloud; he is very glossy; his hair is dark; his eyebrows are lovely, and resemble a bent creeper; his cheeks are good (i.e. charming); his nose is fine; his neck is nice; his chest is lovely and is extremely handsome; he has put on a crown (and) ear-rings; he is decorated with an ornament round his neck; his body is extremely lovely on account of the sweetness of the charming anklets; he is being propitiated by his dear attendants; music is dear to him; he is the complete Brahman, always full of joy; his nature is pure goodness; above him, in the atmosphere (one can see) Viṣṇu, the god of all gods; he is without a beginning; he is the source and of the nature of intelligence; he is intellect and joy, is supreme, and is the lord; he is beyond the three constituents; is unmanifest; is eternal; inexhaustible and immutable; his dark body has the beauty of the sweetness of the mass of clouds; he is very handsome due to his dark curly and glossy hair; his charming eyes are very long (i.e. broad) like the petals of a white lotus; he is surrounded by pure beings having crowns and ear-rings (dangling) about the cheeks; so also by lovely individuals, of the nature of intelligence and intent upon meditation on his form, having thoughts about him in their hearts, and with their eyes fixed on the tips of their noses.

52b-65. By means of body, mind and speech purposeful devotion is practised. On their left (he is surrounded by) yakṣas, gandharvas, siddhas, vidyādharas etc., so also by groups of very charming celestial damsels, intent on dancing and singing; and in front, in the atmosphere, on a comfortable seat, by all devotees of Viṣṇu, longing for Kṛṣṇa, and very much desiring service to his body; (he is surrounded by) Prahlāda, Nārada and others; so also by Kumāra, Śuka and devotees of Viṣṇu; so also by Janaka and others, having a bright (i.e. strong) sentiment, and intent upon inspiration out of the heart (*hṛdbāhya-sphūrtatatparaiḥ*?), with their entire bodies overcome with

horripilation, full of darting love and sprinkled with the nectar of secret. The hymn of twin letters (viz. Kṛṣṇa) is said to be the crest-jewel of all hymns and the origin of all hymns. Of all the hymns of the lord, the child's hymn (i.e. the hymn addressed to Kṛṣṇa, the child), is the cause. The hymn is the crest-jewel of all hymns (addressed to the) child. Resorting to full love and pleasure they mutter the name mentally. They desire a steady means of love for his lotus-like feet. Outside it on a very lovely crystal platform (one can see) in the west the door-keeper—Viṣṇu, who is fair, and has four hands; (he is sprinkled with) saffron, white and red flowers crowding (all) the four directions; he is adorned with a conch, a disc, a mace, a lotus, a crown etc.; he is red, has four hands, and has the lotus, the conch, and weapons like a disc and a mace. In the north, (one can see) a door-keeper, bright with a crown and ear-rings; he, Viṣṇu, is fair; has four hands, has a conch and weapons like a disc and a mace; he is adorned with crown and ear-rings etc. and has put on wood-flowers. On the eastern gate is a door-keeper; is fair and called Viṣṇu. The southern door-keeper is dark in complexion, has four arms, has ornaments like a conch, a disc etc. He is Śrī Viṣṇu of a dark complexion. He, who being restrained and pure, would read or listen to the account of Śrīkṛṣṇa with devotion, obtains love for Govinda.

CHAPTER SEVENTYONE

The Greatness of Rādhākṛṣṇa

The goddess (*Pārvatī*) *said*:

1-3 O holy one, O lord of all beings, O soul of all, O you the origin of everything, O lord of gods, O great god, O omniscient one, O you who show pity (to everyone), since I was pitied by you, I again say tenderly. O lord, you told me the hymns enticing the three worlds. (Now) tell me, by means of which particular things that god (Kṛṣṇa) having a very fascinating form, played with the cowherdesses.

Mahādeva said:

4-9a. Knowing about the descent of (Viṣṇu as) Kṛṣṇa, once Nārada, the best sage, playing upon his lute, went to the village of Nanda (literally, the cow-pen of Nanda). Having gone there and having seen there in Nanda's house the supreme ruler, the lord full of great concentration, who acted as a child, who looked as a god, who was lying on a golden couch on which a soft (bed-)sheet was spread, who was constantly, joyfully looked at by the cowherdesses, whose body was extremely delicate, whose sight was innocent, who was adorned with a mass of dishevelled, dark and curly hair, who manifested just one bud-like tooth by his sprout-like (i.e. delicate) smile, who illumined with his lustres (i.e. mass of lustre) the interior of the house on all sides, who was naked, he was extremely glad.

9b-14. He (i.e. Nārada) who was dear to all lords, addressing the lord of cows, Nanda, said to him: "To get the birth of Nārāyaṇa's devotees is extremely difficult. Here no (persons) know his matchless power. Even Śiva, Brahmā and others desire eternal bliss in him. The deeds of this boy give delight to all; and (people) like them gladly sing and hear about him, and greet him. Men have affectionate minds towards (i.e. men love) this son of yours whose prowess cannot be conceived. They will not be troubled by worldly existence. O best of the cowherds, give up all your desires in this world and the next world. With exclusive and singular mind, love this child." Speaking like this, the best sage went out of Nanda's house.

15-24a. He (i.e. Nanda), having saluted him, honoured him looking upon him as Viṣṇu and gave him leave (to go). Then the sage, the great devotee of Viṣṇu, thought: 'His beloved, glorious Lakṣmī, must have undoubtedly taken up the form of a cowherdess, descended (here) to play with Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu holding the Śārṅga bow. Today I shall look for her in every house of the residents of Vraja.' Thinking like this, the best sage, being (i.e. as) a guest entered the houses of the residents of Vraja. They, looking upon him as Viṣṇu, worshipped him. Seeing the great attachment of all the cowherds etc. to Nanda's son, the best sage mentally saluted them all. In the house of (one of) the cowherds, he saw a girl of a white complexion.

Seeing her, he conjectured: 'This must be Lakṣmī; no doubt about it.' Then the intelligent one entered the large house of certain excellent cowherd named Bhānu, a friend of the noble Nanda. He was duly honoured by him. The noble-minded one too asked him: "O good one, you are known on the earth for your devotion to piety. I observe your prosperity in wealth, grains etc. Do you have a worthy son or a daughter with auspicious marks, due to whom you will have fame pervading the entire world?"

24b-27. Thus addressed by the best sage, Bhānu brought his very lustrous and powerful son and made him salute Nārada. The great, excellent sage, having seen him, who was matchless in form on the earth, whose eyes were long (i.e. broad) like lotus-leaves, whose neck was nice, whose eyebrows were beautiful, whose teeth were fine, whose ears were beautiful, embraced him with his arms, shed tears of love, and affectionately and in a faltering voice said:

Nārada said:

28-31. This your boy will be a good friend of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. Being alert, he will play with them day and night.

Then, when the best sage, after having talked to the excellent cowherd, decided to go, Bhānu spoke to him like this: "O god, I have (also) a daughter, resembling the wife of a god. She is younger than this boy. Her form (i.e. she) is dull and blind and deaf. Prompted by the desire for her prosperity, I seek a boon from you, O most glorious one. By just casting a pleasing glance at the girl make her quite composed."

32-37. Hearing these words, Nārada, with his mind attracted by curiosity, entered the house, and lifting up the girl rolling on the ground and with his mind overcome with great love, put her on his lap. Bhānu, too, reverential due to devotion, came near the excellent sage. Then the best devotee of Viṣṇu, the great sage, very dear to Kṛṣṇa, loving Viṣṇu, seeing her excellent wonderful figure, unseen and unheard of (before), became fascinated as before. Plunging into the ocean of great joy, a unique elixir, the sage, resembling a stone (i.e. being motionless) remained there (i.e. in that condition) for two muhūrtas. Slowly open-

ing his eyes, the best sage woke up. He was very much amazed, and remained silent only. The very intelligent one thought like this only in his heart:

38-46a. 'I, moving freely everywhere, have wandered over all the worlds. But nowhere have I seen any (beautiful woman) like this. I (can) move in the world of Brahmā, in the world of Rudra, and in the world of Indra. But nowhere have I seen one even a croreth part of her in beauty. I have seen the great worldy illusion, the glorious daughter (i.e. Pārvatī) of the lord of mountains, whose form fascinates all the mobile and the immobile (objects). Even she, of an extremely delicate body, does not at all have the beauty (like that of this girl). It is not at all seen that excellent ladies Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, Kāntividyā, just touch (i.e. have) even the shade of her (beauty). I have seen Mohinī, the form of (i.e. taken up by) Viṣṇu, by which Śiva was fascinated. How can it even be similar to her (form)? Therefore, I do not at all have the power to know her true nature. Mostly even others do not know this dear wife of Hari. That growth in love, which now I have for the lotus-like feet of Govinda, on just seeing her, was never there before. Showing great magnificence, I shall praise the respectable one in a lonely place. Her form will cause great delight to Kṛṣṇa.'

46b-56a. Thinking like this, the sage, having sent the excellent cowherd somewhere, praised the girl of a divine form in a lonely place: "O goddess, O you controlling the great illusory power, O you of great lustre, O you having a very fascinating and divine body, O you who shower great sweetness, O you who have let loose the mind due to very wonderful love and delight, you have come wthin the range of my sight due to my indescribable great fortune. O goddess, your sight is always observed to be within (i.e. you always look within); and you appear to be gratified with great joy within yourself only. This your good (i.e. beautiful), pleasing, sweet, agreeable, charming face manifests great wonder and an indescribable rise of joy within. O you very beautiful one, you have the power of a bud to form pollen. You are of the nature of creation, maintenance and destruction. You are of a pure energy, of a quick power and of the nature of knowledge and the highest one. You have the highest heap of great joy of Viṣṇu. O you who have a wonderful

splendour, O you difficult to be obtained by Brahmā, Rudra etc., who are you? You never touch the path of meditation of the best meditating saints. You are the will-power, the power of knowledge and the power of action of the controller (of the world). It is just a part of you that my desire proceeds for. Of the highest lord Viṣṇu, of the magician, the child of illusion, inconceivable are the superhuman powers. They are just the portions of your portions.

56b-60. O you goddess, there is no doubt that you are the power of the nature of delight. In the form of just a child, Kṛṣṇa plays in the Vṛndāvana grove; you fascinate the (entire) universe. Of what nature is your wonderful form touched by youth? Of what kind is your youth, endowed with sportive glance with a smile due to longing for Viṣṇu as a man. O you dear of Viṣṇu, I desire to see that form of yours by which Nanda's son Kṛṣṇa will be enticed? O you great goddess, please show, through kindness, your own form to me who have bowed (before you) and have sought protection with you."

61-69. The best sage, with his mind devoted to her, and saluting that very great goddess, who was great and full of great joy, who was eager with great love, whose body was full of (love), whose eyes were auspicious, stood there, looking at Govinda and describing him like this: "Victory to you, O charming Kṛṣṇa; victory to you who are dear to Vṛndāvana; victory to you who have a charming knitting of the eyebrows; victory to you who are overcome with the sound of the flute; victory to you who have a chaplet of a peacock's tail-feathers; victory to you who entice the cowherdesses. Victory to you whose body is smeared with saffron; victory to you who have put on jewelled ornaments. When shall I, through your grace, see you in your childhood (i.e. as a child)—you who entice (everyone), along with this (girl) of a divine form, and having a beautiful body charming on account of youth, O lord of the world?" When he was praising (Kṛṣṇa) like this, she, that moment only, took up a divine, very fascinating form resembling (that of a young girl) fourteen years old and extremely charming. At that time only, other young girls of Vraja, of the same age, and having divine ornaments, garments and garlands, surrounded her. That motionless best sage became stunned with wonder.

70-79a. Then those friends of the girl, being full of compassion, sprinkled the sage with drops of water at the foot of a tree and revived him, and said to him: "O great sage, O glorious one, O lord of great meditating saints, you indeed have propitiated with great devotion, god Viṣṇu who fulfils the desires of his devotees. Since this (lady) dear to Viṣṇu, who is enticing due to her very wonderful age and beauty, who is difficult to be seen and approached by gods like Brahmā, Rudra, and lords of siddhas and sages, so also by other great devotees of Viṣṇu, has been seen by you due to your indescribable and inconceivable luck; therefore, get up, you brāhmaṇa sage, and quickly muster courage. Having gone round her by keeping her to your right, salute her again and again. Do you not see that the beautiful-bodied is extremely perturbed? Indeed, this moment only she will vanish. (Then) in no way you will (ever be able to) talk to her. O you best among those who know Brahman (or Vedas), you will not again (be able to) see her. But, in Vṛndāvana there is an auspicious Aśoka creeper (Aśoka-tree). In all seasons it is full of flowers; its fragrance pervades all directions. Not far from Govardhana, on the bank of the lake called Kusuma, you will see us all at midnight at its root."

79b-91. Having heard these words of them whose hearts were overcome with love, while the sage, having gone round her keeping her to his right, would salute her who was fashioned with many beautiful objects, (prostrating before her) like a staff Nārada called Bhānu and told him (about that) all-beautiful (girl): "Such is the prowess of the girl, that she cannot be obtained even by deities. But, in that house which is marked with her feet (i.e. her foot-prints) god Nārāyaṇa, Mādhava, himself lives. Lakṣmī also stays there with all prosperity. O best one, today (i.e. now) protect this great one, the most beautiful one, carefully, like a deity". Talking like this, and recollecting her form in his mind the best devotee of Viṣṇu entered the dense forest. The best sage, having resorted to the root of the Aśoka-creeper, waited for the deity—her arrival just there at night, remained there, thinking, overcome with love, of that dear one to Kṛṣṇa. Then, seeing at midnight, those very wonderful damsels who were seen (by him) before, who had put on variegated ornaments and garlands, the sage confounded in his mind, fell (prostrate) like a staff. All

those auspicious ones, having surrounded the sage, entered. Even the sage, desiring to ask something about what was dear to him and he liked, being overpowered by the language dear to beauty (i.e. unable to find appropriate words), could not do so. That deity of the Aśoka-grove, named Aśokamālinī, full of pity, came (there) and said to the best sage who stood with the palms of his hands joined, whose neck was bent due to the burden of (i.e. great) devotion, who was full of wonder and was confused, and who was most polite.

Aśokamālinī said:

92-103. O great sage, I always live in this Aśoka-bud. I always wear red garments, I wear red garland, and red unguents. I use buds red like red lead. I use chaplets, the red lotuses. I am decorated with red rubies, red armlets and red crown. Once, the cowherdesses, having put on variegated garments, while sporting with their beloved one, met just there; and then I devoutly and duly worshipped, with Aśoka-garlands, Viṣṇu taking up the form of a cowherd, and all those of the form of Lakṣmī. Since then I have always been staying among them and pleasing Lakṣmī's lord (i.e. Viṣṇu), the highest (god), with various decorations. I know everything from everywhere. I also know the secret of the cows, the cowherds, and the cowherdesses. You had the desire and said into your heart (i.e. to yourself): 'How shall I see that goddess, of a wonderful form, giving a wonderful joy, dear to Viṣṇu, looking (bright) like gold, having a bright diamond ring and having unsteady eyes? How shall I propitiate her feet with devotion?' Thus, O brāhmaṇa, you thought. In this matter, I shall tell you the account of the very noble sages who remained at the Mānasa lake and practised severe penance, who muttered effective hymns, who meditated upon Viṣṇu, and who constantly longed for his lotus-like feet. Today I shall tell you the great secret in the forest.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTWO

Devotees of Kṛṣṇa Born in Gokula as Cowherdesses

The lord said:

1-6a. O you beautiful goddess, listen with a concentrated mind: There was a sage, named Ugratapas who was firm in his vow. He, performing rites in honour of Agni, ate (i.e. subsisted on) fire, and practised a very wonderful penance. He muttered the great hymn, fit to be muttered and having fifteen letters, bound together by a desire-yielding hymn, securing desired objects from one giving the desired boon, with the word *Kṛṣṇāya* (to Kṛṣṇa), along with the word *Svāhā* (offered to), and giving great prosperity. He meditated upon the dark Kṛṣṇa, mad with dance, eager to grant a boon, having put on a yellow garment, with a flute put at his lower lip, endowed with fresh youth, and dragging his beloved with his hand. Thus, the great sage, engaged in meditation, cast his body after the end of hundred kalpas and was born as the daughter of the cowherd by name Sunandā.

6b-11. She was called Sunandā and held a lute in her hand. There was another sage named Satyatapas practising a great bow. He ate (i.e. subsisted on) dry leaves and muttered a great hymn, ending in devotion, bound by ten letters having the seed of desire. The best sage meditated upon Viṣṇu who put on a variegated dress, who held the creeper-like arms of Ramā, bright with bracelets, who was dancing, getting mad, repeatedly embracing (Ramā), laughing loudly, and having waves of joy in the sky (i.e. cavity) of his belly, holding the flute, who was decorated with the necklace reaching his knees, whose face with folds on his forehead was wet with the drops of sweat.

12-19a. Again and again, casting his body, the great sage, after ten kalpas, was born here from Nandavana, as the daughter of the cowherd named Subhadra, and known as Bhadrā. On her back is seen a divine fan. There was a certain sage named Haridhāman. He practised a difficult penance and always ate leaves only. He muttered a hymn of twenty letters, giving the fruit quickly. Then from the (hymn having) the seed of desire, he got upon it only (*obscure* !). Therewas Māyā; in front of her were water, swans, saffron and bright moon. Then, recollecting

and with a salutation (he muttered the hymn) with ten letters and in the charming bower of the jasmine-creeper he meditated upon the lord who was lying on his back on the beautiful bed of leaves, whose expansive chest was being repeatedly covered by a cowherdess who was greatly overcome with passion and whose eyes were red, with her pair of breasts, who (i.e. the lord) was being kissed on his cheeks, and whose lips were being gratified, who, the wonderful one, was with a smile holding his beloved with his arms.

19b-28. That sage, having cast many bodies was born after three kalpas as the daughter having auspicious marks, of a cowherd named Raṅga. She was known as Raṅgaveṇī. She was skilled in drawing pictures. On her teeth were variegated marks of red colour. There was (also) a sage named Jābāli, a teacher of the Vedas. He, engaged in austerities, roamed over this earth. Once, by chance, he went to a great forest extending over a myriad of yojanas. There he saw a very beautiful well which had on all sides crystal-walls, which was full of sweet water, which was cooled with breezes fragrant with blooming lotuses. In the region to its west, at the root of a banyan tree he saw a female ascetic who was practising a severe penance, was endowed with youth, was of an extremely beautiful form, whose lustre was like the lunar rays, all of whose limbs were beautiful, who had put her left hand on her waist, and made the position of the fingers of her right hand as practised in religious worship, whose eyes were steady, who had given up food and enjoyment, and who had remained steady. The excellent sage desiring to know her (to know who she was) remained there for a hundred years. At the end of that (period) the sage raised her, and politely said to her who was walking (away).

29-30a. He asked her: "Who are you of a wonderful form? What will you do? If it would be proper (to tell me), then please tell it to me." Then the young lady, who was extremely emaciated due to the penance, slowly said (to him):

30b-33. "I am the matchless knowledge of Brahman, who am sought after by best meditating saints. That I, meditating upon the supreme spirit, have been practising in this fierce forest for a long time penance with a desire for Viṣṇu's lotus-like feet. I am full of the joy of Brahman. My mind is pleased with that

joy. Yet, I am looking upon myself to be lonely for want of Kṛṣṇa's love. Now I am extremely dejected, and desire to cast this body in this auspicious well here only."

34-46. Hearing these words of her the sage being extremely amazed and with great love fell at her feet and asked her about the auspicious rite of the service of Viṣṇu after having abandoned dislike for the self. Having known (i.e. learnt) the hymn told by her he went to the Mānasa lake. Then he practised an amazing penance very difficult to practise. Standing on one leg and looking at the sun unwinkingly he muttered a great hymn of twentyfive letters. With great devotion he meditated upon Kṛṣṇa who was of the form of joy, who was moving along the streets of Vraja with a strange and sporting gait, who was making a jingling sound of his anklets with charming steps, who attracted the minds and bodies of the beautiful women of Vraja with the knots of their garments loose and suddenly embracing him, with various sports of love and side-glances accompanied by a smile, and with the charming golden flute called Sammohana, having the fifth note, and kissing (i.e. touching) his bimba-like lower lip, who had put on divine flowers and garments, and who had smeared divine sandal (to his body), who enticed the three worlds with the mass of the lustre of his dark body. Thus having worshipped the lord of the world with many hymns he was born in Gokula at the end of nine kalpas as a daughter having divine form, of a very famous cowherd named Pracaṇḍa. The girl of an auspicious face was well-known as Citragandhā and delighted the ten directions with the various fragrances of her body. See her, the auspicious one, who drinks sweet drinks from Vṛnda, who, being full of passion takes her husband on her body. Necklaces strike her breasts while in contact with them, while fragrances of lovely aloe-wood etc., fall out from them.

47-54. Other great sages whose minds are always pure and who eat (i.e. subsist on) air, muttering a great (i.e. very sacred) hymn, practised penance: 'A recollection to (i.e. of) Kṛṣṇa, having the skill of destroying passion.' Having recited the hymn of fifteen letters the great sages meditated on the figure of Kṛṣṇa, along with Agni's wife, the image which was having divine ornaments, whose fleshy waist was covered with a beautiful silken garment, whose crest was covered with peacock's feathers, whose ear-

rings were bright, who had put the right lotus-like foot on the left shank, who, after having folded his charming lotus-like hands, was wandering, who had put the flute with its cover moving at his waist-region, who gave delight to the eyes and minds of the cowherdesses, who had very wonderfully entered the hall that was filled (i.e. covered) with showers of flowers on all sides by the cowherdesses. Then having cast their bodies at the end of the kalpa they are now born here. On their ears are seen large ear-rings shining with gems. Round their necks are jewelled necklaces, and in their braids are (put) flowers.

55-59. There was a sage named Śuciśravas. There was also another sage named Suvarṇa. They, proficient in the Vedas, were the sons of Kuśadhvaja. With their feet put up (in the air i.e. standing on their heads), they practised a severe penance with a three-lettered hymn. With their minds controlled, they muttered (the hymn) saying 'Hrīm, Haṁsa'. They meditated upon Kṛṣṇa (living) in Gokula, a child ten years old, and constantly enticing the beautiful women looking at him, with his figure like Cupid and with his charming youth. At the end of the kalpa they, having cast their bodies, were born in Vraja as the extremely beautiful daughters of the cowherd Suvīra. In their hands were seen two parrots of auspicious sounds.

60-66a. There were four sages—Jaṭila, Jaṅghapūta, Ghṛtāśī and Karbu—who were blessed and were desireless here and in (i.e. for) the next world. With single devotion they sought the refuge of (Kṛṣṇa) the lover of the cowherdesses. Plunging themselves into water, they muttered a hymn having ten letters with a recollection (of Kṛṣṇa) at the beginning and end, and put together by the triad of Ramās. As cowherdesses, they with deep devotion meditated upon (Kṛṣṇa) who was wandering in every forest, who was valuing the charming, whose entire body was smeared with sandal, who had put on a China rose as an ear-ornament, who had undergone a change due to a garland of lotuses, and was covered with blue and yellow garments. At the end of three kalpas they were born in Gokula (as cowherdesses) of auspicious marks. Those charming ones with curved eye-brows are seated in front. Round their forearms are lovely bracelets supported by (i.e. decked with) gems etc. and divine pearls etc.

66b-73. In the former kalpa a sage name Dīrghatapas was the Vyāsa. His excellent and very intelligent boy, always remembering the feet (of Kṛṣṇa), abandoned his father, mother etc. and meditating on Kṛṣṇa went to a forest. There he, night and day, without eating anything, worshipped god Viṣṇu who had taken up the form of a cow(-herd). With great devotion, muttering the hymn of eighteen letters put together by Ramā, he reflected upon Hari who was seated in a golden pavilion upon a golden seat, who was holding a golden flute with the tips of his golden hands, who was whirling a golden lotus with his right hand, who looked charming due to his body clasped by his dear beloved of a golden complexion, who was laughing with great joy and who was looking at his hermitage. He, full of tears due to joy, with his body decked with horripilation, loudly saying, 'O lord, be pleased', and trembling, fell on the ground to salute the creator of the world with a prostration.

74-79. Saying loudly 'I am fatigued', Viṣṇu with his eyes full of joy, holding the hands of him who desired devotion, who had prostrated himself (before him) like a staff, touched him and spoke to that Śuka, who had obtained the form of his beloved: "O good one, you are my beloved. Thinking of my form, and having become the abode of my love, stay by me." Two cowherdesses are chief, are of the same age, and auspicious. They are practising a steady vow, are of a firm devotion, and are named after the same constellation. One is bright like heated gold and the other has the lustre of lightning. The eyes of one are sleepy, (while) the eyes of the other are pleasing and long (i.e. broad). He worshipped with great devotion the left and right sides of Viṣṇu; and at the end of the kalpa, he, having cast his body, was born as Upananda's daughter, resembling in beauty the petal of a blue lotus, in Gokula of that magnanimous one.

80-91a. That one is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's wife who had put on a yellow garment, who is covered with a red bodice, whose breasts are like golden pitchers, who has put on her entire body the veil of red lead, whose cheeks are shining with golden ear-rings, and who is very beautiful. She is adorned with the garland of golden lotuses, and her stout breasts are smeared with saffron. In her hand there is something to be chewed, given to her by Hari. She is very skilled in playing upon a flute and (other) musical instru-

ments; she is the attendant of Keśava (i.e. Śrī Kṛṣṇa), and some time is engaged by the delighted Kṛṣṇa in singing. An auspicious string of guñjā fruits shines round her conch-like neck. (She is) afflicted by love due to Kṛṣṇa's charm even in his absence; (Kṛṣṇa) causing this young lady to dress as he likes, would make her, singing extremely melodiously, dance, when her friends are playing upon musical instruments. Again and again, she devoutly embraces and kisses Govinda. She is dear to all cowherdesses and is also very dear to Kṛṣṇa. (Then) there was the son of Śvetaketu. He had mastered Vedas and Vedāṅgas. Giving up all this, he resorted to great penance. He constantly muttered the eleven-lettered hymn, meditating upon her who had served the feet of Kṛṣṇa, who was resonant like the sweet Gaṅgā, who was a dear power of Govinda, who was inaccessible to Brahmā, Rudra etc., who was devoutly resorting to the charming glory of (Kṛṣṇa). Making everybody laugh, and keeping himself on sylvan paths, and settling the world all round with smiling lustre, always thinking about the meaning of the hymn, he lived in the spring.

91b-100. He too, after a couple of kalpas attained perfection, and was born here. This girl of a thin body, having bud-like breasts, with a necklace of pearls shining round her neck, having put on a pure silken garment, having anklets, bracelets, armlets, and rings inlaid with pearls, acts like a child. She put on divine ear-rings which were oozing nectar and were auspicious. She had (a mark) like the dot of red lead in her braid that was dressed with musk. On her forehead she had a mark along with (sectarian) marks of sandal. That same tranquil one was seen to worship the highest position (i.e. Brahman). There was a handsome royal sage by name Candraprabha. By Kṛṣṇa's grace he got a son with a charming figure. He was known as Citradhvaja and was a devotee of Viṣṇu from his childhood. The king taught the great eighteen-lettered hymn through a brāhmaṇa to his good son who was handsome, well-composed and twelve years old. When the boy was being sprinkled with water full of the nectar-like hymns, he, that moment only, full of tears, saluted the king. That day the guileless boy of a pure heart, wearing a spotless garment, adorned with necklaces, anklets, strings, neck-ornaments, armlets and bracelets, having

touched (i.e being full of) devotion to Viṣṇu, went to the temple of Viṣṇu, remained (there) all alone, and thought:

101-107a. 'How shall I worship him who is worshipped (by his devotees), who fascinates the cowherdesses and always sports with them on the sand-bank of Kālindī and in the forest.' The boy thinking like this and with his mind very much perturbed, obtained a very great lore and also had a dream. Before him there was the figure of Kṛṣṇa. It was beautiful. It was made of stone. It was (placed) on a golden seat. It was marked with all (good) characteristics. It was dark like a blue lotus. It was having glossy beauty. It was adorned with peacocks' feathers. It was having charm due to three folds; it was gladly playing upon the flute which was made of gold and was put to his lower lip. It was served by two beautiful damsels standing on its left and right sides. It aggravated their passion with kisses, embraces etc. Citradhvaja, having seen Kṛṣṇa having a sporting attire like that, was abashed in his mind, and bent his head before him.

107b-116. Hari, laughing, said to the beloved on his right side: "O you lotus-eyed one, having produced a divine, wonderful form of a young lady, resembling you and being very bashful and seated on your body, look upon it as non-distinct from your body. Touched by the lustres in your body it will have your form." Then that lotus-eyed one went near Citradhvaja, and remained thinking his body to be non-different from her body. Then the lustres from her body filled his body. From the lustre of her breasts, too charming, stout breasts were produced. From the lustre of her buttocks, charming, round hips were produced. From the lustre of the hair, ornamented hair was produced. From (the lustre of) her two hands, hands were produced. Thus, everything—ornaments, garments, garlands etc.—was well-accomplished. And with fragrance inside, she became skilled in arts. Seeing, as one lamp (is lighted) from another, that fortunate girl on the earth, named Citradhvajā, who was charming with a smile and was beautiful, she, by her arms, seized her with love and gladly took her away. And having embraced the woman standing by Govinda's side, she said: "This is your female servant. Give her a name. With love tell her, the beloved, liked by you, (what) service (she should do to you)."

117-129a. Then, as she liked, she named her Citrakalā, and said: "For serving the lord of our life, full of virtues, you take the flute, always remain near him, and sing in various notes. This is the practice enjoined upon you." Then Citrakalā, obeying the order saluted Mādhava. Having seized the feet of his beloved and having taken the dust-particles from his feet (on her head), she sang very sweet songs, giving joy to both of them. Then Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of joy, embraced her with love. When she was fully (merged) in the ocean of joy, she woke up. Citradhvaja, overcome with great love, and intent on remembering that (Kṛṣṇa) only, the highest joy, wept with a free voice (i.e. freely). Since then, giving up food and pleasures, he, who was weeping, though talked to by his father etc. did not say any word. Resorting to Kṛṣṇa at night, he remained in his house for a month. (Then) going out (of the house) to a forest, he (there) practised a penance, difficult to be practised by sages. After casting his body at the end of a kalpa, that great sage, only due to his penance, was born as the auspicious daughter named Citrakalā, of a cowherd named Vīragupta. On her shoulder, a charming lute, adorned with the seven notes, was always seen. On (her) left (shoulder) a wonderful golden pitcher (decked) with jewels, remained. In her right hand, (she had) a jewelled spittoon. (Then) there was a sage, Kaśyapa's son, named Puṇyaśravas, who knew all duties. His father was a davotee of Śiva, and everyday praised the lord of gods, the lord of the universe (i.e. Śiva) who loves his devotees.

129b-134a. Śiva along with Pārvatī was pleased with him. He granted him a boon at midnight on the fourteenth day (of a fortnight): "Even as a child, your son will be a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Having performed his thread-ceremony in his eighth year, teach him the twentyone-lettered hymn which (will) be told (to you) by me. This hymn, called *Gopāla-vidyā* (lore of Gopāla), gives the power of (getting whatever is expressed by) words. On the tip of the tongue of him who accomplishes this, the wonderful account of Kṛṣṇa remains. The figure of the Infinite one himself, granting boons, comes (to him). Beginning to recite the hymn with the words *Kāmamāyā Ramākaṇṭha Sendrā Dāmodarojjvalā* (i.e. the bright Dāmodara with Indra etc.),

then reciting the ten-lettered (hymn) in the middle, he should again refer to them.

134b-147. I shall tell you the meditation with the sages etc. expressed by ten letters. He should remember the island full of light of the full treasure of nectar, and surrounded by Kālindī, (and) he should reflect on him in the grove of Vṛndāvana. It is covered with trees and creepers dropping flowers in all seasons, and (resounding) with the cries of dancing and intoxicated peacocks and the crying cuckoos and (humming) bees. In it is a great Pārijāta-tree which is a hundred yojanas tall and has the expanse of branches and twigs. At its spotless foot, the young cowherds holding flutes and syringes have formed a circle, surrounded by a circle of cows. Inside it there was a charming circle of the beautiful women of Vraja, who had many presents in their hands, whose minds were overcome with ardent passion, who had joined the palms of their hands (in obeisance); it was a circle of them who had put on white garments, who were adorned with bright ornaments, whose hearts were overcome with love. He would think about the dear words of the daughters of Śruti (i.e. sacred ordinance). Then on the jewelled altar he would think about Hari, covered with a silken garment, lying on the breasts of Rādhā on a portion of a plantain tree, and looking at her beautiful face with a charming smile on it, with his left foot slightly bent, embracing his beloved with the left hand holding a flute, touching her chin with his right hand, having the brightness of pearls, having large eyes like white lotuses, having put on a yellow and spotless garment, with his head shining with a load (i.e. mass) of peacocks' feathers, charming due to a necklace of pearls, having ear-rings of the shape of crocodiles shining on his cheeks, having a Tulasī-garland (hanging) up to his feet, having the ornaments like bracelets and armlets, adorned with anklets, rings and a girdle, being very delicate, being of the age of a child; the worship is said to be of ten letters only. The initiatory rite is marked with the scriptures.

148-154. Saying so the lord vanished; so also the goddess, daughter of the (Himālaya) mountain and his chaste wife. The sage having come (to his) son taught him like that. Puṇyaśravas, after having vanquished all the sages, described (in) various

(words) him who was having wonderful marks like form, beauty, cleverness and charm. Then the boy, delighted at heart, went out of his house. Eating (i.e. subsisting on) air, he practised panance for three myriad kalpas. At the end of it he was born in Gokula, in the house of Nanda's brother. Her name was Lavaṅgā. She observed (i.e. knew) the internal thoughts of Kṛṣṇa. In her hand is seen the mechanism with which the face was washed. I have thus told you about certain principal beloveds of Kṛṣṇa. That man, who devoutly reads or causes to read this chapter full of many pleasures of Kṛṣṇa along with the excellent girls in Vraja, having charming and smiling eyes, goes to the abode of the lord Śrī Vāsudeva.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTHREE

The Greatness of Mathurā

The lord said:

1-6. I have told you in (due) order, the wonder about which you asked me. Who is not stupefied there, where Brahmā and others are stupefied? Yet I shall tell you what the great sage (Vyāsa) said to Ambarīṣa, a devotee of Viṣṇu, connected with Śiva. The king, having come to the Badaryāśrama, saluted and praised, with a desire to know the Vaiṣṇava way of life, Vedavyāsa who was seated there, who had restrained his senses, who was noble, omniscient, and best among men: "Please protect me from this mundane existence. I am detached from the sensual pleasures; I salute them, I salute everything. How would I always obtain mental recourse to that highest Brahman, a position free from dejection, having a form of auspiciousness, intelligence and joy, the highest sky, the absence of ether, which is healthy, and seeing which the sages cross the ocean of worldly existence?"

Vyāsa said:

7-14a. You have asked me a great secret. I have not told it (even) to Śuka, my son, what you have asked me. But I shall tell it to you who are dear to Viṣṇu. Listen, this great universe

was of his form, was situated in him; it was unmanifest, free from pain; it was full of the lord. Formerly, I, subsisting on fruits, roots, palāśa-leaves, water and air, practised penance for many thousand years. Then Viṣṇu said to me who was engaged in meditation on him: "O you very intelligent one, what do you want to do, or what do you want to know? I am pleased; ask for a boon from (me) who am the best among the givers of boons. I tell you the truth that the mundane existence lasts till I am seen." Then, with my body full of horripilation, I said to Kṛṣṇa: "O Madhusūdana, I desire to see you with my physical eyes, whom the principal Vedas described as the truth, the highest Brahman, the light of the world, the lord of the world, the wonderful visible lord."

The lord said:

14b-19. I was formerly asked by Brahmā and was requested by him. I shall tell you also what I had told him. Some describe me as Prakṛti (i.e. the primordial matter); some call me Puruṣa, the lord. Some call me Dharma (i.e. Piety); some call me wealth; some call me Mokṣa (i.e. salvation) where there is no fear from anywhere. Some call me void. Some call me devotion. Some call me Sadāśiva. Others described me as the only eternal one remaining on the top of the Vedas, of a good disposition, without a change, and of the form of goodness, intellect and joy. See, today I shall show you my form concealed by the Vedas.

Then I saw, O king, a boy who was like a dark cloud, who was surrounded by cowherdesses, who was laughing along with the cowherds, who was seated at the root of a Kadamba tree, who had put on yellow garments, and was wonderful.

20-23a. (I also saw) a grove named Vṛndāvana, which was adorned with fresh foliage, which was resounding with the notes of cuckoos, which was charming due to (the presence of) Cupid. I (also) saw the river Kālindī, which had the colour of the petals of blue lotuses. I also saw the Govardhana (mountain) which was held up by the hands of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, for destroying the pride of the great Indra and which gave pleasure to the cowherds. I saw the cowherd (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) who was happy in the

company of women and who was playing upon the flute. On seeing him, the ornament of all ornaments, I was extremely delighted.

23b-29a. Then the lord, moving in the Vṛndāvana grove, himself said to me: "There is no greater form of mine than the one which is divine, eternal, partless, actionless, calm, and of the form of auspiciousness, intellect and joy, complete, having eyes like the petals of a fully blossomed lotus, which you saw (now). The Vedas describe this only as the cause of causes, which is true, eternal, of the form of great joy, a mass of intellect, eternal and auspicious. Know my Mathurā to be eternal, so also Vṛndāvana; so also (know to be eternal) Yamunā, the cowherdesses and the cowherds. This incarnation of mine is eternal. Do not have any doubt about it. Rādhā is always dear to me. I am omniscient, greater than the great. I have all my desires (fulfilled), I am the lord of all, I am all joy and greater than the great. In me appears all this universe, spread out by (my) Māyā (illusion)."

29b-31a. Then I spoke to the lord, the cause of the cause of the world: "Who are the cowherdesses? What are the cowherds? What kind of tree is this said to be? Who is the grove? What are the cuckoos etc.? What is the river? And what is the mountain? Who is this noble (one that has become the) flute, the only place of joy to all people?"

31b-36a. The lord, happy and with his lotus-like face pleased, said to me: "The cowherdesses should be known to be the Vedas. The young daughters of cowherds should be known to be the ṛcs (hymns). They are divine damsels, O king. They are endowed with penance and desire salvation. All the cowherds are sages, the forms of joy in Vaikuṇṭha. This Kadamba is the desire-yielding tree, the receptacle of the highest joy. The grove is called Ānanda, which destroys great sins. The cuckoos and others are siddhas, sādhyas and gandharvas. There is no doubt about it Some are his joyful heart, Yamunā is the body. This mountain is the servant of Viṣṇu and has no beginning. Listen, who is the flute. O brāhmaṇa, you know it (to be) like that.

36b-54. There was a brāhmaṇa, of a tranquil mind, engaged in penance and truthfulness. His name was Devavrata, and

he was proficient in ceremonial acts and sacrificial rites as enjoined in the Vedas. Being in the midst of Viṣṇu's devotees, he was engaged in (various) rites. O king, once he heard that the lord of sacrifice was (present in the house). The brāhmaṇa, determined (to see) me went to his house. That devotee of mine in his house worshipped (me) with a Tulasī-leaf and water and offered me something (like) a fruit and a root. The intelligent one affectionately gave him the water for bath and fruits. Smiling without faith, he too accepted it from the brāhmaṇa. Due to that sin he had the extremely fierce condition of a bamboo; and as a result of that religious merit he became dear to me. Due to that (merit), O king, he shines as the chief. At the end of the age, he, being one with Viṣṇu, will obtain (the state of) Brahman. Oh, men with wicked hearts do not know my ancient city, which is great, which is praised by lords of gods and serpents and sages, which is charming and old. Though there are cities like Kāśī, Mathurā alone is virtuous among them; birth, thread-ceremony, death or cremation in that gives salvation to men. When men become purified by penance etc., have pure hearts, and have constant meditation as their wealth, then only they see my city, not otherwise, even after hundreds of kalpas, O best brāhmaṇas. The residents of Mathurā are blessed, and are respected even by the residents of heaven. Their greatness is immeasurable, and all of them have four hands. The residents of Mathurā do not see any defect due to thousands of births and deaths in those in whom (other) men see a fault. Those who are even poor, but who remember Mathurā, are (really) blessed. There the god, the lord of beings, giving salvation even to the sinners (lives). That great lord of beings, who is always most dear to me, never leaves the city due to affection for me. That man of bad conduct who would not salute the lord of beings or would not worship him, would not see this my self-shining city, called a great deity. How would that sinful man who would not worship my great devotee, viz. Śiva, obtain devotion to me? Those mean men who do not salute the lord of beings, do not remember him or praise him, have their minds mostly deluded by my Māyā (illusion). Even the boy Dhruva, engaged in worshipping me, obtained a pure place, obtained with difficulty by the grandsires. A man, being lame, or blind,

would come to my city Mathurā, difficult to be reached by gods and would cast his life there.

55-56. O glorious Vedavyāsa, do not have any doubt at all about the secret of the best of the Vedas, which I have divulged to you. He, the pure one, who would recite or listen to with devotion this chapter narrated by the lord, will have eternal salvation."

CHAPTER SEVENTYFOUR

Arjuna's Wish and Its Fulfilment

The lord said:

1-3. Once, in private, glorious Uddhava, dear to the lord and an attendant of his, asked Sanatkumāra: "Where is that great place which is always the abode of gods, where Govinda sports everyday with the cowherdesses? If you have affection for me, tell me the account of (Govinda's) sport and whatever else that is wonderful, if you know it."

Sanatkumāra said:

4-6. As occasion arose, I have told what that noble Arjuna, of a good vow, and the attendant of the lord, at some time seated on the bank of Yumunā, at the root of a certain tree, saw and did—his experience in loneliness. I shall tell you that. Listen with great attention. But you are not to divulge it here and there (i.e. anywhere).

Arjuna said:

7-12. O you ocean of compassion, O lord, be pleased to tell me all that which Śaṅkara and others, so also Brahmā and others have not seen or heard. What have you told before? The cowherds' wives are dear to you. How many kinds do they have? How many are they in number? How many names do they have? Who are they? Where are they? Where are they settled? How many (i.e. what) are their deeds? O lord, what is their age?

What is their dress? O lord, with whom and where will you sport in privacy in every forest that is eternal, that has eternal happiness and eternal grandeur? Where and of what kind is that eternal and great place? If you have that kind of favour (towards me) then please tell all that to me. O you glorious one, O you who destroys the distress of the distressed, you will (please) tell me all the secret, which even I have not asked and which is not known to me.

The lord said:

13-29a. That is my place. Those are my dear ones. Such is my sport, which is imperceptible even to men who are (to me) like my own life. This is the truth. O dear one, when told about it, you will be eager to see it. How other people can, when it cannot be seen even by Brahmā and others? Therefore, O dear one, desist (from asking about it). What (do you lose) without that?

Hearing these very fearful words of the lord, Arjuna, being helpless, fell at both his lotus-like feet (prostrating himself) like a staff. Then the revered lord, affectionate towards his devotees, raised him with his arms, and with great love said to him: "What is the use of telling about it now? For you are going to see it. Having with great devotion propitiated that glorious goddess Tripurasundarī, in whom everything has come up, remains even now and will merge, present yourself to her. Without her I can never give this position to you."

Having heard these words of the lord, Arjuna, with his eyes full of joy, went to the feet of the glorious goddess Tripurā. Having gone there he saw the altar of the desire-yielding gem, very much decorated with staircases fashioned with various jewels. There (he saw) a desire-yielding tree which was bent with many flowers and fruits, and which was brightened due to foliage, having leaves, tender in all seasons and dripping with sprays of flowing honey and unsteady due to wind; which (i.e. the tree) was resounding with parrots, flocks of cuckoos, sārikās and pigeons, so also with sportive partridges and (other) charming birds; which had at its foot a divine, very wonderful, jewelled temple which was shining with bright jewels, and charming

like a wild fire. There was a jewelled throne, made of bright gold and enchanting, and very wonderful.

29b-31a. Arjuna, saying, "I am known as Arjuna", and having repeatedly saluted, by folding the palms of his hands, and full of devotion to the goddess who resembled the young (i.e. morning) Sun, who was decorated with many ornaments, who was endowed with fresh youth, whose four arms resembling creepers shone with a goad, a noose and a bow, who was very much pleased and attractive, whose lotus-like feet were adorned with the rays of the gems in the crowns of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa (i.e. Śiva) etc., who was covered with (i.e. who possessed) the (supernatural powers) like aṇimā,[1] sat in a secluded place. The goddess, the treasure of compassion, knowing his adoration and good temper, and overcome by his recollection said (to him) tenderly:

The goddess said:

31b-37. O child, which rare gift have you made to a person worthy to receive gifts? Which sacrifice have you performed? Or, which penance have you practised here (i.e. in this world)? Or formerly which (kind of) devotion have you accomplished? Or which difficult and auspicious, great act have you done, so that the lord has, indeed, gladly done you a favour, which is the most secret, and which cannot be had by anyone else? O child, that favour which the universal soul has done to you, is not (done by him) to the people of the mortal world, living on the earth, (so also) to deities etc. living in heaven, and not at all (done) to all his devotees who are best ascetics and practise abstract meditation. Then, come on; knowing the lake, my seat, resort to it. The goddess fulfils all desires. (Therefore) go with her; and having duly bathed there, quickly come (back) here.

38-46a. Then only, Arjuna went there, bathed, and came like that (i.e. as he was told). The goddess made him who had bathed and come (back), offer nyāsa[2], mudrā[3] etc., and told into

1. Aṇimā—The superhuman power of becoming as small as an atom.
2. Nyāsa—Assignment of the various parts of the body to different deities, which is usually accompanied with prayers and corresponding gesticulations.
3. Mudrā—Name of certain positions of the fingures practised in religious worship or devotion.

his right ear the lore (called) *Bālāvidyā* which gave instant success, which was great, which had for its goal half the portion of Śiva (i.e. Pārvatī), which was unique and which was adorned by everything. (She also made him) practise religious austerities, worship and mutter the prayer five lakh times; and having duly carried out the performance (of worship) with the buds of karavīra tree, the goddess, kindly spoke to him this (i.e. these words): "Worship me in this manner only. Then, when I shall be pleased, you will be entitled to the sport of Kṛṣṇa due to my favour. This rule has been formerly formulated by the lord himself."

Having heard like this, Arjuna worshipped her with that hymn. Then having performed the worship and muttering, he pleased the goddess. Then, having performed an auspicious sacrifice and having bathed duly, Arjuna regarded himself as blessed, as one whose almost all desires were fulfilled, and as one having every success in his hands.

46b-51a. At this time the goddess, coming to him, spoke, with a smiling face, to him: "O child, now go into the interior of that house". Then, Arjuna hastily and joyfully got up, and full of immeasurable delight, he saluted her in the manner of a staff (i.e. by prostrating himself before her). Then, ordered by the goddess, Arjuna, along with the friend of the goddess went to the place of the lord of Rādhā, which is inaccessible even to siddhas. Then he was shown Vṛndāvana which remained above Goloka, which was stable, sustained by wind, eternal, the abode of all happiness, in which the great festival of Kṛṣṇa's dance with the cowherds constantly went on. He saw the great secret full of the feeling of love.

51b-54. By her words (i.e. order) only he saw that secret, and being beyond himself and overcome with enhanced love, he fell there. Then regaining consciousness with difficulty he was raised by her by (holding) his arms. Due to her words of consolation, he somehow became stable. "Tell me what other penance should be practised by me?" Thus, full of anxiety to see him, he was unsteady. Then holding him by her hand, she went towards the southern direction of that place.

55-61a. Going along a good region, she spoke these words

(to him): "O Arjuna, in order to bathe enter this (lake) which is auspicious, has extensive water, has the shape of a thousand-petalled lotus with a bud in the centre, four waterfalls and four streams, and is full of a multitude of wonders. On entering into its interior, you will notice a special property. To the south of it is this lake. There is drunk honey and spirituous liquor distilled from the madhūka tree, after which the stream (flowing) from Malaya (mountain) is named. This park is full of flowers, where, in the spring season, Kṛṣṇa celebrates the vernal festival in honour of Cupid, heaped with vernal flowers; where they, day and night, praise the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, by whose mere recollection the sprout of love would be (rising) in the heart of an ascetic. Then, having bathed in this lake, and having gone to the bank of the eastern lake, and having bathed in its water, accomplish your desire (i.e. desired object)."

61b-74a. Then having heard the words, when Arjuna plunged into the water of the lake, which was tinged with the pollen dropped from white lotuses, lotuses opening on moonrise, (other) lotuses and red and blue lotuses, and which was agreeably perfumed with honey-drops, which was shaken by the notes of corpulent swans, whose four banks were decked with jewels, which had ripples due to gentle breezes, she vanished just there. The charmingly smiling one got up and on seeing around, was confused. He instantly saw himself (to be turned into) a wonderful, excellent lady, who had a slim, fair, charming body like the rays of pure gold, whose age was that of a sparkling youth, whose face resembled the autumnal moon, whose hair was very dark, curly, glossy and shining with jewels, whose curls of hair on the plate (-like forehead) were brightened up due to the rays from the mark of red lead, who had vanquished Cupid's bow due to the knittings of the creeper-like eyebrows being manifest, whose wagtail-like eyes were dark like clouds and sportive, whose round cheeks were sparkling due to the bright lustre of the jewelled ear-rings, whose wonderful creeper-like arms were delicate like lotus-stalks, whose sprout-like hands took away all the beauty of autumnal lotuses, who had put on a waist-band made of gold and arranged cleverly, whose hips were shining with jingling girdles, whose beautiful place of hips was covered with a shining garment, whose lotus-like feet were very charming due

to the jingling jewelled anklets, who possessed the skill in the various arts of love being manifested, who was endowed with all (good) characteristics, who was adorned with all ornaments. Due to the illusion of (i.e. created by) the lover of the cowherdesses he forgot whatever belonged to his former body; and after that, being very much astonished, stood there, not knowing what to do.

74b-80. In the meanwhile, there was heard a sudden, grave voice in the sky, saying: "O beautiful lady, go along this (path) only to the eastern lake. Having bathed in its water, accomplish the (object of your) desire. O you of an excellent complexion, there are your friends. Do not sink. They will, there only, accomplish (for you your) desired choice." Hearing these divine words, she went to the eastern lake which had many wonderful streams and which was crowded with various birds, which shone with quivering white lotuses, white lotuses opening at moonrise, (ordinary) lotuses and blue lotuses that were quivering, and with rubies, which had a good bank of (i.e. decked with) lotuses, whose four banks were adorned with various lovely arbours of creepers and trees having abundant flowers. Having bathed (there), she stood for a moment. Then she heard in her ear (i.e. with her ears) the tinkling of small bells tinged with the (sound of) jingling girdles and sweet anklets.

81-88. Then (she saw) a bevy of young damsels that had wonderful youth, who had put on wonderful ornaments, whose figures and speech were wonderful, whose bodies were wonderful, who were unique, whose amorous actions were the same and wonderful, whose conversation was interesting, whose laughter and beholding were agreeable, whose beauty was sweet and wonderful, who possessed all sweetness, whose charm of understanding had reached the extreme, who were wonderfully beautiful, whose beauty was wonderfully glossy, whose favour etc. was wonderful, who were a heap of all wonders, whose appearance etc. was wonderful. Seeing that great wonder and thinking a little in her heart, she, scratching the ground with her toe, remained (there) with her face hung down. Then they hastily looked at one another: 'Who is this one, belonging to my class, that has created curiosity (in us) for a long time?' Having thus observed her, and (thinking) for a moment, 'she should be known'

(i.e. 'we should know who she is'), they, clever in deliberation, deliberated, and came to see her out of curiosity. One of them, a wise one, named Priyamudā, came (to her) and with sweet words and affection spoke to her:

Priyamudā said:

89-91. Who are you? Whose daughter are you? Whose beloved are you? Where were you born? Who brought you into this (region)? Or have you come on your own? Tell all this to us. What is the use of anxiety? Is there any trouble to anyone in this place of great joy?

Thus asked by her, she bowed through modesty; and enticing their minds, she spoke in a sweet voice.

Arjuna said:

92-97. I do not know anything as to who I am, as to whose daughter I was born, whose beloved I was, who brought me here or if I came here on my own; but the goddess might know it. (Please) hear what is told by me, if you believe my words. To the southern side of this, there is a lake. I came to bathe there, and remaining there only I became fearfully eager. Then looking all round in (every) direction, I heard a wonderful voice in the sky, "O beautiful lady, go along this (path) only to the eastern lake. Having bathed in its water, accomplish the (object of your) desire. O you of an excellent complexion, there are your friends. Do not sink. They will, there only, accomplish (for you your) desired choice."

98-104a. Having heard these words I came here from there. My mind is full of dejection and joy and I am fully overcome with anxiety. I came here, and after bathing in its water, I heard many kinds of auspicious sounds, and then I saw you, the great ones. Physically, mentally, and through words, I know this much only. O respectable ladies, this much I have told you, if you like. Who are you? Whose daughters are you? Where were you born? Whose beloveds are you?

Hearing those words of hers, that Priyamudā spoke: "Let

it be so. O auspicious one, we are his beloveds. We are daughters happily sporting with the Moon of Vṛndāvana (i.e. Kṛṣṇa). We are self-delighted. So we have come here as the cowherdesses. These are the groups of the sacred texts; these again are the sages. We are cowherdesses. I have told you about our nature.

104b-121. (We are those) most beloved to the lord of Rādhā due to (our) mirth. We always sport irregularly; we always play and move. This is goddess Pūrṇarasā. This is Rasamantharā. This one is Rasālayā by name; and this is Rasavallarī. This is Rasapīyūṣadhārā; this is Rasataraṅgiṇī; and this is Rasakallolinī; and this is Rasavāpikā; this is Anaṅgasenā; and this is Anaṅgamālinī. This young lady is Madayantī and this is Rasavihvalā. This is Lalitā by name, and this is Lalitayauvanā; and this is Madanamañjarī. This is Kalāvatī by name, and this one is known as Ratikalā. This is Kāmakalā by name; this is Kāmadāyinī. This young lady is Ratilolā; and this young lady is Ratotsukā; and this one is Ratisarvasvā; and this one is Raticintāmaṇi. Some of these are always delighted and always give love. After this (come) the groups of the scriptures. Listen to (the names of) some of these: This one is Udgītā; this one is Sugītā; this dear one is Kalagītā. This young lady is called Kalasurā; this young lady is Kalakaṇṭhikā. This one is Vipañcī; this one is Kramapadā; this one is known as Bahuhutā. This is one known as Bahuprayogā. This lady is called Bahukalā. This one is called Kalāvatī; and this one is known as Kriyāvatī. After this (come) the groups of the sages. Some of them are here: This one is named Ugratapā; this one is known as Bahuguṇā. This one is Priyavratā by name; and this one is said to be Suvratā. This one is known as Surekhā. This young lady is known as Suparvā. This is Bahupradā. This one is called Ratnarekhā. This one is known as Maṇigrīvā; and this one is Suparṇā; (and these are) Ākalpā, Sukalpā, Ratnamālikā. This (lady of) beautiful eyebrows is Saudāminī; and this one is Kāmadāyinī; and this one is called Bhogadā; this chaste one is Viśvamātā. This one is Dhāriṇī; and this is Dhātrī; this one is Sumedhā; and this one is Kānti. This one is Aparṇā; this one is known as Suparṇā; and this one is Sulakṣaṇā. This one is Sudatī. This one is Guṇavatī; and this one is known as Saukalinī. This one is called Sulocanā; and this one is known as Sumanā. (These are known

as) Aśrutā, Suśīlā, and Ratisukhapradāyinī. Next are we, the cowherdesses, that have come here.

122-138. O you having a face like a lotus, get acquainted with some of them. This one is Candrāvatī; this auspicious one is known as Candrikā. This is Candrāvalī. This one is Candrarekhā and this is Candrikā. This one is called Candramālā and this one is known as Candralikā. This is Candraprabhā and this lady is known as Candrakalā. This one is Varṇāvalī; this one is Varṇamālā; this one is Maṇimālikā. (This one) is called Varṇaprabhā; this one is Suprabhā; this one is Maṇiprabhā. This one is Hārāvalī; this auspicious one is Tārāmālinī. This one is Mālatī; this one is Yūthī. (These are) Vāsantī and Navamallikā. This one is Mallī; this one is Navamallī. This one is known as Śephālikā. This one is Saugandhikā. This one is Kastūrī; this one is Padminī; this one is Kumudvatī. This one is Rasollāsā; this one is Citravṛndā; this one is Surekhā; this one is Svarṇarekhikā. This one is Kāñcanamālā; this other one is the chaste Asantatikā. All these have surrounded (you). Others also are to be introduced to you. O you beautiful, young lady, you will amuse yourself with us and with these. Come on to the bank of the eastern lake. There, O friend, having duly given you a bath, I shall give you a hymn, giving success."

Thus suddenly taking her (to the lake) and having duly bathed her, she made her accept, according to the proper rites, and in brief, the excellent hymn of the beloved of the Moon of Vṛndāvana, which was excellent and belonged to the germ of Varuṇa (-hymn), and put forward by the seed of the hymn sacred to Fire, which was endowed with the fourth note, and decorated with a point of sound, and sewn between the Praṇavas and extremely difficult to get in the three worlds. Every success comes by merely accepting the hymn. There is the repetition of the name of a deity accompanied with burnt offerings. There is meditation; and there is a number of sacrifices and the success due to muttering of prayers. Along with her friends she gladly worshipped the goddess whose body was fair like heated gold, who was adorned with various ornaments, whose form and beauty were wonderful, who was well-pleased, and who gave boons according to proper rites, and with white lotuses and karavīra flowers etc., with camkaka flowers and lotuses, so also with other fragrant

flowers and (other objects) having fragrance, with water for washing feet and rinsing mouth, with charming incense and lights, so also various offerings of eatables; then she repeated the hymn for a lakh times; she made offerings according to the proper rites, praised her and fell (prostrate) on the ground like a staff.

139-143. Then without a wink the goddess was praised with a longing for her. She, through illusion, got ready her shadow, and put, as it were through force, the beloved, near her. She was surrounded by her friends, and was delighted. Due to the worship, muttering of prayers, eulogies, devout salutations, she manifested herself through grace. Her complexion was like gold or campaka flowers. She was bright due to beautiful ornaments. Her figure was lovely due to beauty in every limb, large and small. Her face was beautiful like the full moon in autumn. Her smile and appearance were kind and simple. She was attractive in (all) the three worlds. She brightened the ten directions with her lustre. Then that goddess, granting boons and affectionate towards her devotees, spoke:

The goddess said:

144-154. The words of my friends are true. Therefore, you are my dear friend. Get up, come along, I shall fulfil your desire.

Arjunī, having heard the words of the goddess which were (but) the longing of her heart, and with her body lovely due to the sprout-like horripilations, with her eyes full of tears, and again overcome with love, fell at the feet of the goddess. Then she said these words to her friend-goddess, Priyaṁvadā. "Holding her hand, and cheering her up, bring her near me." Then, being zealous by the order of the goddess, Priyaṁvadā took her like that and came near the goddess. The goddess, dear to Hari, went to the bank of the northern lake, and having duly bathed her and made her worship according to the proper rites and preceded by a solemn vow, made her accept the hymn, granting good success, of (i.e. sacred to) the Moon in Śrī Gokula. The vow is called Gokulanātha, is old, and adorned by Mohana (i.e. Kṛṣṇa); the hymn gives all success and is preserved in all reli-

gious treatises teaching magical and mystical formalities. She, knowing the songs of Govinda gave her steady devotion. She told her the meditation and the enchanting king of hymns. It is told in the religious treatise called Mohana. Even its recollection gives success. One should meditate upon (Kṛṣṇa), dark like the petal of a blue lotus and adorned with many ornaments, and having beauty like that of a crore Cupids, and full of love. For purification, she told this secret to Priyaṁvadā.

Śrī Rādhikā said:

155-167a. Till her excellent initiatory rite would be over, be attentive, and along with your friends, protect her.

Having kept (there) the shadow of her own and of her beloveds, she went near the lotus-like feet of Kṛṣṇa. That Rādhikā, the beloved of Kṛṣṇa, remained there as before. Here, by the advice of Priyaṁvadā, she prepared an auspicious eight-petalled lotus, and having written that wonderful auspicious hymn, and drawn the mystical diagram giving success, with bright yellow pigment, saffron, and sandal mixed together, and having made Nyāsa etc., and having duly offered water for washing the feet, materials for worship, and having offered worship to Nanda's son with many flowers of the season, with saffron and sandal incenses, lights, offerings of eatables, tāmbūlas and perfumes used to scent the mouth, and with garments, ornaments and flowers, and having, along with all followers, weapons and vehicles, praised and duly saluted him, she remembered him. Then the lord, Yaśoda's son, influenced by devotion, with a smile and wavy side-glances and thoughts said to goddess Rādhikā: "Quickly bring her here." The goddess (thus) ordered, sent for friend Śāradā, and she brought her suddenly before the playful one. Having come in front of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and overcome with love, she, observing everything wonderful, fell on the ground after being turned into gold. Having somehow got up with difficulty, and having slowly opened her eyes, she, full of burden of perspiration and horripilation and trembling, saw there a beautiful and attractive place.

167b-177a. There was also a desire-yielding tree, which was having bright emerald-like leaves, which was having foliage

with sprouts, which was delicate, and had golden stems, which had crystal-like shoots and roots, which granted rich objects of desire, and which gave the desired fruits to a suitor. Under it was a jewelled temple. There was a jewelled throne. There (i.e. on it) was an eight-petalled lotus. There were the two treasures[1] viz. Śaṅkha and Padma, placed on the left and right (sides). In the four directions were placed the desire-yielding cows at proper places. Around it was the Nandana garden. It was served by the Malaya-breezes. It was scented with lovely fragrances of flowers of all seasons (and) thus had defeated (the fragrance of) Kālāgaru (sandal). It was cool due to the shower of the drops of honey and was very lovely. Its interior was constantly resounding with the hummings of the swarms of female bees intoxicated on tasting the honey. It was resounding with the sweet notes of cuckoos, pigeons, sārikās, and female parrots, and others in (i.e. hidden behind) leaves. It was full of the dances of intoxicated peacocks and enhanced the passion of love. It had the beauty of the thin (layer) of darkness like collyrium produced by the emission of juice.

177b-196a. She saw Kṛṣṇa whose hair was very glossy, dark, curly and fragrantly perfumed; on whose head was tied the best tail of a peacock intoxicated with madness; on whose left side was the ear-ornament of flowers resorted to by bees; who was shining with the mirrors of his cheeks, bright with the bee-like hair; who was shining with the beauty of the large forehead having a beautiful mark; whose nose was lovely like the sesamum-flower and the eagle's beak; whose lips were charming and like the bimba fruits; who inflamed passion of love with his gentle smile; who looked lovely due to the necklace resembling a wild flower; whose both large and charming shoulders were shining with the garland (of the flowers) of the divine tree, resorted to by thousands of intoxicated female bees; who was adorned with the Kaustubha on the region of the chest shining with a pearl necklace; who had the mark of Śrīvatsa, who was attractive on account of his hands hanging up to the knees; who was very handsome on account of having his waist like that of a

1. Nidhi—The treasure of Kubera. They are nine in number: Mahāpadma, Padma, Śaṅkha, Makara, Kacchapa, Mukunda, Kunda, Nīla and Kharva.

lion and with a deep navel; who was lovely due to not long and very round knees like a good tree; who was adorned with excellent ornaments like bracelets, armlets, and anklets; whose hips were covered with a portion of his yellow garment; who had vanquished a crore of Cupids in beauty by means of his loveliness; who enchanted (others) by means of charming songs proceeding from his flute; who made the three worlds plunge into the ocean of happiness; who had the arrogance of Cupid in every part of his body; who was tired due to his interest in dancing. There were deities appointed at respective places, observing his internal feelings, having fixed their eyes on his face, who were in due order and with respect carrying separately a chowrie, a fan, a flower, a perfume, sandal, and tāmbūla, a mirror, a drinking vessel, a spitting pot, and also other objects of sport, so also frankincense and an amulet. Arjunīyā, having seen in confusion on the left side of the pleasing goddess Rādhikā, propitiating and offering a tāmbūla to him of a bright smile, was overcome with the passion of love. Then Śrīkṛṣṇa, who knew everything, knowing her to be like that, seized her hand, and he the lord, the great master of magical art secretly sported with her in the entire pleasure-forest. Then putting his sport-like arm on her shoulder and coming to Śāradā, said to her: "Bathe quickly this slim-bodied lady of a gentle smile, fatigued due to sport, in this western lake." Then that goddess Śāradā (took her) to the western lake, (and) said to her, "Take bath". The fatigued one did like that. She who got to the interior of the water, again turned into Arjuna and got up at the place where the lord of gods and the chief of the beautiful Vaikuṇṭha stood. Seeing Arjuna dejected and broken-minded, Kṛṣṇa kindly touched him with his hand and put him (back) to his nature.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

196b-198a. O Dhanañjaya, I bless you. You are my dear friend. In the three worlds there is none else like you who knows my secret. O Arjuna, you will curse me if you tell anyone the secret about which you asked (me) and which you have experienced.

Sanatkumāra said:

198b-200a. Thus having received his grace and having taken decision due to being bound by oaths, Arjuna, with his mind delighted and having wonderful recollections, went home from that (place). I have thus told you the entire secret of Govinda that is known to me. I swear you if you tell it to him.

The lord said:

200b-204. Having heard these words the follower of the cowherd got success. He went to Vṛndāvana in the abode of Nara and Nārāyaṇa. There he, knowing the daily sports of Kṛṣṇa, stays even today. I did not tell this secret to Nārada, even though I was asked by him. Yet, having reached the natural form, he obtained it. O you auspicious one, like one of your stock, you are not to tell the secret which I told you through love (for you), to anyone else.

He who would read or listen to this wonderful chapter describing the greatness of the lord's devotee, obtains pleasure in Hari.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFIVE

Nārada's Experience

Pārvatī said:

1. O lord, you have told me in various ways the secret of Vṛndāvana. Due to which particular religious merit did Nārada obtain the natural form?

The lord said:

2-6. Once, formerly I desired to know a wonderful account. From the lotus-like mouth of Kṛṣṇa I heard the secret told by Brahmā. Nārada asked me. Then I got this. "I am not at all able to tell its greatness. What shall I do? Remembering his

oath I am distressed in my mind." Hearing these words of mine, when he became sad, then, O dear one, I called Brahmā and ordered him: "Tell Nārada what you told me." Then Brahmā, hearing my words, went with Nārada near Kṛṣṇa and asked him that only.

Brahmā said:

7. O you lord of the subjects, what is that Vṛndāvana forest of thirtytwo (parts)? O lord, I desire to hear (about it). If I am fit (to hear about it, then) tell it to me.

Bhagavān said:

8-14a. This charming Vṛndāvana is just my unique abode where there are actually these beasts, trees, insects, men and gods, who stay near me. When they (will) die they (will) come to me. Those wives of the cowherds that live in my abode, are the female devotees. The gods (also) are devoted to me. This forest of mine, which is of a divine nature, is (having an area of) five yojanas. This Kālindī called Suṣumnā (the artery in the human body lying between Iḍā and Piṅgalā), is a great river of nectar; and in it gods and beings live in a subtle form. I have pervaded (the forest) on all sides, and I never leave it. In every yuga appearance and disappearance take place here. This place is full of lustre, and it is invisible to the physical eyes. In the yuga, see my secret, my prowess—the Vṛndāvana. It can never be seen by gods like Brahmā.

The lord said:

14b-16. Having heard that, Nārada saluted Kṛṣṇa and Brahmā, and came to the Miśraka Naimiṣa forest on the earth. There he was well-received by the best sages like Śaunaka; and they asked him: "O brāhmaṇa, tell us wherefrom you have come now." Hearing that Nārada said: "Having heard the secret of Vṛndāvana from Kṛṣṇa's lotus-like mouth, I have come from Goloka."

Nārada said:

17-18. There repeatedly a number of questions were asked.

There I heard all the hymns and spells. I shall truly tell (you) those only according to the questions (asked by you).

Śaunaka and others said:

19. If you favour us, then tell us the secret of Vṛndāvana, which Brahmā told you.

Nārada said:

20-22a. Sometime, on the bank of Sarayū we saw Gautama who was wise, very unhappy and had his mind full of anxiety. Seeing me, the divine Gautama fell on the ground (i.e. prostrated himself before me). I said to him: "O child, O child, get up. If you like, tell me why you are called wise".

Gautama said:

22b-24a. From your mouth (i.e. from you) only, I have heard the fact about Kṛṣṇa like that. (I have also heard) many times the secret called Dvārakā and Mathurā. But from your lotus-like mouth I have not heard the secret about Vṛndāvana, from (i.e. by hearing) which my mind will be steady, O good preceptor.

Nārada said:

24b-32a. This is a great secret, the secret of secrets. Formerly Brahmā told me that secret about Vṛndāvana (when I had said to him): "O lord of gods, O father, tell me the secret of Vṛndāvana." Hearing this desire (of mine), he remained silent for a moment. Then he said to me: "O child, go to Mahā (i.e. great) Viṣṇu, my lord. Undoubtedly I must also go there with you." Saying so, and taking me (with him) he went to the abode of Viṣṇu. He told Mahā Viṣṇu what I had said to him. Hearing that Mahā Viṣṇu himself ordered the self-born one (i.e. Brahmā). "By my order, you take the sage Nārada, and arrange for his bath in the lake called Amṛta." Ordered by great Viṣṇu the self-born one acted like that with me. Having entered the Amṛta lake, I took bath there. Just at that moment I was (i.e. I found myself) near women, beyond (i.e. on the other side of) the lake. (I was) turned into a woman, endowed with all (good) characte-

ristics and was very much amazed. Seeing me coming, those (women) repeatedly asked (me):

The women said:

32b-35. Who are you? Wherefrom have you come? Explain your conduct.

Listen to what I said on hearing their agreeable talk. "Where I have come from, who I am, how I have become a woman—all this appears like a dream. Am I confused on the earth?" Hearing those words of mine, the goddess spoke to me in a sweet sound: "This is the city by name Vṛndā, which is always dear to the Moon in the form of Kṛsna; and I am the goddess Lalitā, gone beyond the fourth state and without parts (i.e. whole)."

36-39a. The great goddess, who was addressed like this, and whose mind was soft with pity, again said to me: "Come along with me." All other women, devoted to Kṛṣṇa's feet, said the same thing to me: "Come along with her." O you who resemble gods, the fourteen-lettered hymn of the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa—the noble one, and also of that goddess was then kindly narrated to me; and just at that moment, I got her resemblance.

39b-45. With them, (we) went where the eternal Kṛṣṇa remained. The lord, who was merely of the form of the Good, the Intelligence and the Joy, and of that of a woman, and whose heart was delighted due to the women, again and again said to me: "Come along O dear one, O beloved, embrace me devoutly." O you best brāhmaṇa, there only he enjoyed (with me) for a year. Then that best lover said to that goddess Rādhikā: "This was my natural form there, which had taken the form of Nārada. Take her to the Amṛta lake, and arrange for her bath." Then I spoke agreeable words to my lover. "I am Goddess Lalitā and that Rādhikā who is celebrated in songs. I am called Vāsudeva, who always is of the nature of the art of love. I am truly of a feminine form, and I am the ancient woman, and I am goddess Lalitā, and in a manly form I have Kṛṣṇa's body.

46-53. O Nārada, there is no difference between us. This is the truth, the (only) truth. He, who knows, along with the (code of) conduct and convention, the fact and usual practices about

me, so also the hymn (sacred to me), is dear to me like Lalitā. This sacret (place) named Vṛndāvana, is my abode. This is to be disclosed at no place. It should never be told to a brute." After that goddess Rādhikā took me to the lake, waited there, and went (back) near the feet of the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa. Then immediately after plunging (into the lake) I came (back) as Nārada, having the lute in his hand, and repeatedly engaged in gladly singing that great secret. Having saluted the self-born (i.e. Brahmā), I went to Viṣṇu's assembly. The self-born one saw that, but did not say anything at that time. O child, I have told you a great secret. You too have to guard carefully the (secret about the) unique, perfect abode of the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa, like (that of) the paramour of one's mother. As I have told the agreeable (story) along with its secret to my dear disciple Gautama, in the same way I have narrated fully to you the great secret.

54-55. O brāhmaṇas, if sometime it would be disclosed wheresoever, then certainly there would be a curse from the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa, O best sages.

He, who would read or listen to this excellent chapter full of the sports of Kṛṣṇa goes to the highest position.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSIX

The Greatness of Kṛṣṇa

The lord said:

1-3. Here, hearing that Śiśupāla was killed, Dantavakra came to Mathurā to fight with Kṛṣṇa. Hearing that Kṛṣṇa got into a chariot and came with him to Mathurā. Then he killed him, and having crossed Yamunā, and having gone to Nanda's abode, he saluted his parents and consoled them. He was embraced by them. He embraced all the old cowherds, consoled them, and pleased all living there by (giving them) many garments and ornaments.

4-6. On the charming sand-bank of Kālindī (i.e. Yamunā), crowded with auspicious trees, he, day and night enjoying sports with the cowherdesses, lived for three nights. In that region, all people like the cowherd Nanda, with their sons and wives, so also beasts, birds and animals, having divine forms, got into an aeroplane and reached the highest place—Vaikuṇṭha. And Śrīkṛṣṇa, having given all the residents of Nanda's cow-pen his own infallible place, and being praised by hosts of gods, entered the glorious Dvārāvatī.

7-9. There he was everyday worshipped by Vāsudeva, Ugrasena, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Akrūra etc. He of an omnipresent form, enjoyed on very soft beds, strewn with flowers of the divine trees in the divine, jewelled bowers of creepers, with his queens numbering sixteen thousand and eight. Thus, for the welfare of the gods, for destroying the entire burden of the earth, he descended in the Yadu family, and having destroyed all the demons (and thus) having destroyed the great burden on the earth, having released the immobile and mobile living in Nanda's abode and at Dvārikā from the bondage of the worldly existence, he established them in his great, eternal, charming abode meditated upon by the meditating saints. Being always waited upon by divine queens etc. Vāsudeva said to all: "Brahman was unseparated like (the particles of) hail and ghee. Freed from the constituents (of the Primordial Matter), he, living in the Prakṛti (the Primordial Matter), melted and went to heaven."

CHAPTER SEVENTYSEVEN

A Description of Kṛṣṇa

Pārvatī said:

1-2. Tell me in detail the importance of the meaning and the words of the hymn; so also (tell me) the nature of the god, and (about) the splendour of his places. O lord of gods, (tell

me) all (about) the great abode of Viṣṇu and Hari's (i.e. Viṣṇu's) different modes called eternal bliss.

The lord said:

3-6a. In the excellent Vṛndāvana (one sees) Kṛṣṇa surrounded by crores of cowherdesses. Gaṅgā is a great power there. The Ānandakānana is (also) there. It is made fragrant by fragrant breezes (blowing) over many good flowers. It is cool and has the colour of the divine ripples of the daughter of Kalinda (i.e. Yamunā). It has come in contact with the best sages—the devotees of the lord like Sanaka etc. It is adorned with flocks of cows, bellowing joyfully and sweetly. It is covered with boys having charming garlands and ornaments and dancing.

6b-13a. There is a glorious desire-yielding tree, covered with gold. It is rich with many gems and corals. It is bright with many gem-like fruits. At its root is a jewelled altar. It is brightened by the rays of jewels. There (i.e. on it) is an excellent golden throne made of the triad (of the Vedas); (one can see there) the lord of the world who is seated there, who is beyond the three constituents (i.e. beyond Prakṛti), who is immutable, who resembles a crore of moons, who is bright like a crore of suns, whose handsomeness is like that of a crore of Cupids, who illumines the ten quarters, who has three eyes, two hands, who is fair and bright like heated gold, who is always embraced by beautiful women, who is always everywhere respected, who is meditated upon and influenced by Brahmā and others and Sanaka and others, who is always surrounded by crores and crores of scriptures that have obtained the bodies of cowherdesses repeatedly kissing him, embracing him and laughing, and with their hearts set upon the spirituous liquor (coming) from his lotus-like feet.

13b-18. That goddess who among them is bright like heated gold, who brightens up all directions and makes them bright as (with) lightning, is the Pradhāna (i.e. Prakṛti), who has pervaded all this. She is of the nature of creation, maintenance and destruction. She is beyond knowledge, ignorance and the triad (of Vedas). She is of (his) natural form, is of the nature of power, of the nature of illusion (Māyā) and is full of intelligence. She brings about the cause of the bodies of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

The entire mobile and immobile world is grasped by illusion. Due to her similarity with Viṣṇu, Rādhā is called Vṛndāvaneśvarī. A man should meditate like this, upon him, god Kṛṣṇa, the lord of Vṛndāvana, who remains embracing her, who is shaking due to the influence of passion for kissing and embracing. He would obtain success.

19-21. That noble one, who knows this best hymn, hymn of (i.e. sacred to) him, and mutters or listens to it, is very difficult to find. (There are) Rādhikā, Citrarekhā, Candrā, Madanasundarī, Śrīpriyā, Śrīmadhumatī, Śaśirekhā, Haripriyā, beautiful like gold, deluding and shining with horripilation due to love, having paleness and perspiration, attached due to love, talking agreeably. (Then there are) Suvarṇamālinī, Śāntā, Surasā and Rasikā.

22-23. She who leads the full life of a woman, who is affectionate to the helpless, who is of a pure heart, who has fully drunk the nectar of (Kṛṣṇa's) name, is called Rādhā. Rādhā is endowed with a prolonged smile, has the lustre of heated gold, is the river of surging love, a choice collyrium for (better) view.

24a. She who possesses pity and envy, who lives in the empire of charity, who indulges in the joyful battle of copulation, is called Citrarekhā.

24b-27a. She whose body is fair, who is not very tall, who is always engaged in instrumental music, who gesticulates helplessness, who is overcome by swoon and horripilation, who remains on the right side of Hari (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), to whom all hymns are dear, who possesses sweetness due to desire for love (-making), is called Candrā.

27b-30a. She whose gait is sportive and slow, who has charmingly closed her eyes, who is bright and full of the stream of love, who looks charming due to expanded collyrium, who is interested in Kṛṣṇa's love, who is eager for the sound of Kṛṣṇa's dance, who possesses egotism, who has condemned the moon with her face, who is clever in (speaking) sweet words, who is the crest-jewel of those who have curbed their senses, who is endowed with a charming smile, is Madanasundarī.

30b-31. She who is interested in the faultless dance of Kṛṣṇa, who is dark (yet) charming, who attracts Hari's heart through love and affectionate glance, who has conquered her senses, who has curbed her anger, is called Priyā.

32-34a. She whose body is fair like well-heated gold, who has a sportive gait and is beautiful, whose figure is sweet due to the strikingness of the love caused by Cupid and horripilation, whose face endowed with a charming smile has put down the moon, who is skilled in (speaking) sweet words, who is the crest-jewel of those who have restrained their senses, and who is intent upon the fulfilment of love, is Madhumatī.

34b-40a. She who is endowed with the fever of delusion, horripilation and stream of love, who diverts herself with charity (looking upon it as insignificant) as dust, who is a great dancer following the sound of Kṛṣṇa's dance, and who is always Kṛṣṇa's beloved, is Śaśirekhā. She is Kṛṣṇa's soul. She is excellent, is dark, has lovely and tawny eyes. She is fascinated by the love for his feet; sometimes she is touched by horripilation. At Śivakuṇḍa she is Śivānandā; on the bank of Dehikā she is Nandinī. She is Rukmiṇī at Dvārāvatī; and in the Vṛndāvana-grove she is Rādhā. This goddess of mine has become Devakī at Mathurā; similarly at Citrakūṭa she is Sītā. On the Vindhya (mountain) she is Vindhyanivāsinī. At Vārāṇasī she is Viśālākṣī; and in (i.e. with) Viṣṇu she is Vimalā. Kṛṣṇa who graced her, gave her the rule over Vṛndāvana. At other places she is the goddess and is Rādhā in the Vṛndāvana-grove. Kṛṣṇa has always a happy body, who is called bodiless.

40b-48a. He having Kṛṣṇa's body is described as the superintending deity of Air, Fire, Sky (i.e. Ether) and Earth, so also of Brahmā. Though the sun is powerful, yet is not designated with power; in the same way Kṛṣṇa endowed with brilliance, certainly deludes time. He does not have a material form, produced from marrow, flesh or bones. He possesses a wonderful power, is another lord, and having an eternal body, is the soul of all. Hardness is accidental as in the case of (particles of) hail and ghee. The surface of the foot of Kṛṣṇa of unlimited primary substance is not a deity (*obscure*!). In the mass of dust in Vṛndāvana, there are crores of Viṣṇus. In Ānandakiraṇa, the Moon of the universe (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) is surrounded by a group. The souls are parts of his rays as the nature of constituents is present in the soul. Kṛṣṇa is surrounded by (i.e. having) two arms. He never has four arms. There, surrounded by a cowherdess, he always sports. Govinda (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) alone is a man; Brahmā and

others are women only. From that nature appears. This lord is a mode of nature.

48b-51. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are the first Prakṛti and Puruṣa. Except the lord of Vṛndāvana, everything is the product of Prakṛti. Due to their appearance, this world appears, and breaks on their disappearance. As gold does not perish (even though its products may perish), so Kṛṣṇa does not fall even if (his incarnation like) Matsya perishes. This expanse of the three constituents (guṇas) (i.e. the mundane existence) is the expanse of him who sports in Vṛndāvana. The ripple of an ocean turns into a wave; but the ocean is not (newly) produced.

52-55. There is no woman resembling Rādhikā, and no man resembling Kṛṣṇa. There is no (better) age than adolescence; that is the great innate disposition of Prakṛti. Adolescence should be thought upon. Vṛndāvana-grove should be thought upon. The greatest form is (that of) Śyāma, and the greatest delight is the first god. Childhood lasts up to the fifth year. Boyhood is up to the tenth year. Adolescence lasts for eight and five years. The limit (of it) is the fifteenth year. Adolescence, springing up from youth (*yauvana*) is called fresh youth (*navayauvana*). That age is his all-in-all; other age (than that) is unreal (*prapañca*).

56-62. I salute the charming childhood, boyhood and adolescence. I salute the young cowherd Kṛṣṇa who is of the form of Cupid-like cowherd, who is the cowherd-Cupid, of the nature of an adolescent and is wonderful, and whom they call the Cupid-enticer, whose youth has just broken up (i.e. set in), who is the great ocean of continuous, matchless nectar-like joy. The lord of Śrī is victorious. The body of him having the form of youth is hidden. Men of different minds, according to the difference in their likings, see him who is one only, immutable, ancient, who is to be known through meditation in the group of the cowherdesses. I salute him, the lustre of whose nails is Brahmā, who is meditated upon by gods like Brahmā, who is beyond the three constituents (i.e. Prakṛti), who is the lord of Vṛndāvana. Govinda never leaves Vṛndāvana. His body elsewhere is artificial. There is no doubt about it. I worship that Nanda's son who is easily accessible to the women in Vraja, but

difficult to be reached by those who desire salvation. The hymn is the great lustre of his nails.

Pārvatī said:

63. As long as the female imp in the form of the desire for salvation or enjoyment is present in the heart, how can, till then, the delight of love rise there?

The lord said:

64-65. O good one, you have asked well. I shall tell all that there is in my mind. Listen attentively. (A devotee) remembers his virtues, his name, songs pleasing the mind; enlightens himself, and always is merged in (his) love.*

CHAPTER SEVENTYEIGHT

Worship Prescribed for a Devotee of Viṣṇu

Pārvatī said:

1. Tell me the correct way of life of the followers of Viṣṇu, practising which all men will cross the ocean of worldly existence.

The lord said:

2-9. Here the purification of the devotees of Viṣṇu is said to be in twelve ways: Smearing the house, similarly approaching Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), going round (his idol) with devotion, (lead to) purification of the feet. Taking leaves and flowers with devotion only for the worship of Hari (leads to the purification) of the hands. This purification is the most important of all purifications. Narration of the names, so also of the virtues of god Śrīkṛṣṇa with devotion, is said to cause the purification of speech. Listening to his account, and witnessing his festival—this is said (to lead to) the proper purification of the ears and eyes. Putting on one's head the water (used for washing the idol's) feet, the flowers that had been offered (to the idol), and the garlands (offered to

*Some verses of this charter like 41, 44ff. are not quite clear. Some, e.g. 52b ff. seem to be irrelevant.

the deity) is said to cause the purification of the head of him who has bowed down before Hari. O dear one, smelling the flowers etc. offered to him (leads to) the purification of the heart, and it is laid down as causing the purification of the nose also. That (place) alone, where there are flowers (and other objects) offered at the couple of feet of Kṛṣṇa, is purifying in the world, and that (alone) would purify everything.

10-11. Worship (of Kṛṣṇa) is said to be of five kinds. Listen from me (i.e. as I tell) the difference in them. I shall, in proper order, describe to you the worship of five kinds, viz. *Abhigamana*, *Upādāna*, *Yoga*, *Svādhyāya* and *Ijyā*. The real approach (to the deity consists in) cleansing the place of the deity, smearing it and removing the flowers that were offered to it.

12a. *Upādāna* (i.e. acquisition) is the collection of sandal, flowers etc.

12b. *Yoga* (i.e. union) is the thought that the deity of one (i.e. worshipped by one) is oneself (only).

13-14a. *Svādhyāya* (i.e. self-study) consists in muttering (the deity's name) with the scrutiny of the meaning of the hymn, reciting Vedic hymns and hymns of praise (of a deity), so also the narration of (the virtues etc. of) Hari. *Svādhyāya* is also said to be study of branches of knowledge about the (final) truth etc.

14b-16a. *Ijyā* (i.e. worship) is properly worshipping one's deity. O you of a good vow, I have thus told you the worship of five kinds. According to the occasion I shall in due order tell you about (the worship) that gives equality with the deity, nearness of the deity, residence in the same heaven with the deity, intimate union with the deity, and assimilation to the deity. (I shall also tell you about) the worship of the Śālagrāma stone.

16b-27. In the hands of Keśava having four hands, are held, in order, a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus beginning with the right hand, then the upper hand (etc.). The mace-holder is called Keśava. Nārāyaṇa is he who in due order holds the weapons viz. a lotus, a mace, a disc and a conch. Mādhava would be (he who holds), in order, a disc, a conch, a lotus and a mace (in his hands beginning with the right hand, then the

upper one...). The mace-holder called Govinda holds a mace, a lotus, a conch and a disc. My salutation to you, of the form of Viṣṇu, holding a lotus, a conch, a disc and a mace. My salutation (to you) of the form of Madhusūdana, possessing a conch, a lotus, a mace and a disc. My salutation to Trivikrama having a mace, a disc, a conch and a lotus. My salutation (to you) of the form of Vāmana having a disc, the Kaumodakī (mace), a lotus and a conch. My salutation (to you) of the form of Śrīdhara, having a disc, a lotus, a conch and a mace. Salutation to you, O Hṛṣīkeśa, having a disc, a mace, a conch and a lotus. Salutation to your own form of Padmanābha, having a lotus, a conch, a mace and a disc. Salutation to Saṁkarṣaṇa, having a conch, a lotus, a disc and a mace. O Vāsudeva, salutation to you having a disc, a conch, a mace and a lotus. Salutation to him who has taken the form of Pradyumna, having a conch, a disc, a mace, and a lotus. Salutation to the form of Puruṣottama having a lotus, a conch, a mace and a disc. Salutation to (you having) the form of Adhokṣaja having a mace, a conch, a disc and a lotus. Salutation (to you) of the form of Nṛsiṁha holding a lotus, a mace, a conch and a disc. Salutation (to you) of the form of Acyuta having a lotus, a disc, a conch and a mace. Salutation (to you) of the form of Śrīkṛṣṇa having a mace, a lotus, a disc and a conch.

28-43. That is god Śrī Gadādhara who is present in the aperture of Śālagrāma stone, who holds two discs, who has white lines and who is rich in beauty. That is Puṣkala, the forepart, with two discs present and of a red lustre. There is Saṁkarṣaṇa, so also is Pradyumna. The one having small discs is Pītaka. The round one that is having a long hollow and holes is Aniruddha. The dark one, dark-blue at the aperture and having three lines, is Nārāyaṇa. Nṛsiṁha is the one having the lines of the form of a mace, and having a very tall navel-lotus; he has a big disc. One having three dots is Kapila. (This one) or one having five dots is Kapila. (This one) or one having five dots should be worshipped by a celibate. That is Varāha that has three marks and two uneven circles. Nīla has three lines, is having dots, and is big. That is the form of the tortoise. The dark one having circles and eddies, is whitish and

has the backside preserved. Śrīdhara has five lines. Vanamālin is marked with a mace. Vāmana is round; one having a disc in the centre is Nīlaka. Anantaka is the one that has many colours, many forms and the hood of a serpent. Dark and corpulent is Dāmodara. The one having a circle in the centre is Nīlaka. May he, of a contracting aperature, protect (me). So also Brahmā, the very red one. The one having a very long line is Suṣīra; Pṛthu is the one having a disc and a lotus. Kṛṣṇa has a big disc and a large hole. Bindumān has a dot. Hayagrīva has the form of a goad. One having five lines is Kaustubha. Vaikuṇṭha shines spotless. The black one, having one disc, is like the shape of a long lotus, is having a long lotus, is having a long line, and whitish is Matsya. Rāmacandra has vertical lines. That one that is dark, is Trivikrama. Salvation to him, staying in the Śālagrāma-Dvārakā, who, marked with one, and having a mace and looking charming, should protect (me). With two (are formed) Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa; with three Trivikrama. With four, the four modes. With five, Vāsudeva (is formed). May Pradyumna, with six, and Saṁkarṣaṇa with seven, protect (me). Puruṣottama would be (formed) with eight; the one with nine modes is placed as new. May Anirundha, having the ten incarnations and with ten, protect (me). The one with twelve souls, with twelve (may protect me). Anantaka has more than this (number). Brahmā has four faces, a staff, a water-pitcher and a garland and is tall. Maheśvara has five faces, ten arms and is bull-bannered, and has respective weapons.

44. The mother are Gaurī, Caṇḍikā, Sarasvatī and Mahālakṣmī. Divākara has a lotus in his hand.

45-46. The attendants like Gajāsya, Gajaskandha, Ṣaṇmukha are of many kinds. They are there, or are installed and if they are worshipped in a palace, a man obtains *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma.*

CHAPTER SEVENTYNINE

Do's and Don't's for a Devotee af Viṣṇu

The lord said:

1-2. Not only in the house (but everywhere) the worship of Hari should be done everyday on the Śālagrāma, a gem, a mystical diagram or images. In one region of Gaṇḍakī there is a great place of Śālagrāma (i.e. where Śālagrāma stones are found). May the stone found there protect. This is the case.

3-5a. By the touch of the Śālagrāma stone, the destruction of sins committed during crores of existences takes place. Then (what can be said) about Viṣṇu's worship there? It is the cause of (being in) the vicinity of Hari. One would obtain the fruit of worshipping a hundred liṅgas. If one would obtain a black stone (i.e. Śālagrāma) having a mark of a cow's foot, as a result of religious merit of many existences, then (the mission of) one's life is accomplished.

5b-11. First one should examine a glossy, excellent, black stone. One that is slightly black is said to be mediocre. A mixed one always gives a mixed fruit. As the fire always present in wood is manifested by friction, in the same way the (all-)pervading Hari is felt in a Śālagrąma. He who everyday would worship twelve Śālagrāma stones from Dvāravatī, is honoured in Vaikuṇṭha. (If) a man observes an aperture on the Śālagrāma stone, his dead ancestors live contentedly in heaven till the end of the world. There is the residence in the form of Vaikuṇṭha, where there is the Dvāravatī stone. A man dying (here) goes to the city of Viṣṇu. That sacred place spreads over three yojanas. Everything (like) muttering, worship, sacrifice (performed there) would be crorefold meritorious. Over the area of one krośa, whatever is desired (is obtained). There is no doubt about this, since, even an insect dying here goes to Vaikuṇṭha.

12-15. The man who fixes a price on the Śālagrāma stone, so also who sells it, and he who gives consent (to the deal), so also he who sanctions its examination—all these go to hell till the sun (shines in the sky) and till deluge. Therefore, O respectable lady, one should avoid the purchase and sale of the

(Śālagrama with a) disc. There is no doubt that salvation takes place there where there is the union of the deity in Śālagrāma and the one born in Dvārakā. The one produced in Dvārakā, endowed with a disc, marked with many discs of the shape of a stone having a round seat, is of the form of Brahman and unstained.

16-21a. Salutation to (you) of the form of Oṁkāra and of the form of constant joy; O glorious Śālagrāma, favour me, (your) devotee, who desires your grace and is stricken by death. Hereafter I shall gladly tell you the manner (in which) the dot (or mark is put), hearing which all men would obtain assimilation to Viṣṇu. (A man) should have Keśava (i.e. take Keśava to be present) in the forehead, Śrī Puruṣottama in the neck, god Nārāyaṇa in the navel, Vaikuṇṭha (i.e. Viṣṇu) in the heart, Dāmodara in the left side, and Trivikrama in the right, Hṛṣīkeśa in the head, and Padmanābha at the back, Yamunā and Gaṅgā in the ears, and Kṛṣṇa and Hari in the arms. (These) twelve deities are said to be pleased in their respective places.

21b-25. When a dot (i.e. a mark) is put he should recite these names. He, with all his sins purified, goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. He, even though he is a cāṇḍāla, on whose forehead an upright line is seen, is of a pure heart, and deserves to be honoured. There is no doubt about it. One should not look at a man on whose forehead an upright mark is not seen; (and) on seeing him one should look at the Sun. On seeing or touching a brāhmaṇa on whose forehead a mark with three lines or an upright mark is not seen, one should bathe with one's clothes on. One should put a mark of the form of Viṣṇu's foot, keeping space between (the toes).

26. On the head of that mean brāhmaṇa who would not put an upright mark, there is always the foot of a dog (placed on it). There is no doubt about this.

27-29. One should know that a very auspicious upright mark starting from the nose and ending with the hair, and having a hole (i.e. space) in between, is the temple of Viṣṇu. One should know that Brahmā has settled on the left side, Sadāśiva on the right, and Viṣṇu in the middle. Therefore, one should not besmear (i.e. cover) the middle (part). The glorious one who, after

looking into a mirror or into water puts the upright mark, goes to the highest position.

30-33a. Fire, Water, the Vedas, and the Moon and the Sun, so also Wind, always remain in the right ear of a brāhmaṇa. Gaṅgā also remains in the right ear, and Fire in the nose. By touching both (these), one is purified at that moment only. Having put water in a conch and having mixed it with Tulasī, one should give it to the noble devotees of Viṣṇu, drink it, and salute (them) with the head (bent down). One should drink it and sprinkle one's body, one's son, friend and wife with it.

33b-36a. The water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, when drunk, destroys sins (committed) in crores of existences. The sin becomes eightfold on dropping (even) a drop on the ground. He who, holding a conch full of water in his hand, praises (the deity) and goes round (it), always holds the water, has obtained the fruit of his existence. He in whose house there is neither a conch nor a bell with the (form of the) eagle on it before (the image of) Vāsudeva, is not a follower of the lord (i.e. Viṣṇu) in the Kali age.

36b-45. (Going) to the lord's temple in vehicles, or with sandals on, or drinking spirituous liquor there, not (offering) service in the festivals of the deity, not saluting before (the image of) him, or saluting the lord with the remains of food on the hands etc. not washed, or when impure, saluting the lord with (only) one hand, or spreading the feet before him towards the south, or enjoying a bed before him, or lying (in front of him), or eating, or telling lies, or talking loudly, or talking to one another, crying and quarrelling, curbing or favouring, talking cruelly to women, covering with one garment (only), censuring or praising others, speaking obscene words, breaking wind, behaving badly with an inferior because of having power, eating without (first) offering (the food) to the deity, not offering (to the deity) fruits etc. produced during the season, giving the remains after use of a seasoned article etc., eating (food) after making it distinctly visible, censuring and praising others, keeping mum before the preceptor (i.e. not talking to him), praising himself, censuring deities—these are said to be thirtytwo offences against Viṣṇu: "O Madhusūdana, day and night I commit thousands of offences. Thinking me to be yours, foregive me."

46-47. Uttering this prayer he should salute (the deity prostrating) on the ground like a staff. Hari always forgives thousands of offences. Similarly the brāhmaṇas should eat in the evening and in the morning whatever food is left over by Viṣṇu's devotee. (Such a person) is freed from the sins committed during the day.

48-57a. Uttering me (i.e. my i.e. Śiva's name) and thinking 'food is Brahmā, and sauce is Viṣṇu', he who eats (food) is never covered by the faults of the food. A man who is a devotee of Viṣṇu should not eat a round bottle-gourd, masura-beans with their skin on, the white nut of the palmyra tree, egg-plant; (similarly) a man who is Viṣṇu's devotee should not eat on the leaves of a bunyan tree, aśvattha or arka tree, or a kovidāra or kadamba. In (the month of) Śrāvaṇa he should avoid vegetables; he should forgo curd in Bhādrapada. In the month of Āśvina he should avoid milk and should give up (eating) flesh in Kārtika. (He should) also (avoid) burnt food, citron, and whatever is not offered to Viṣṇu, so also common citron, vegetables and visible salt. If by chance he would eat (any one of these), he should remember his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) name. Haimantika (a kind of rice), grains anointed with sugar, mudga sesamum, barley, kalāpaka (a kind of grass), kaṅgu, wild rice, vegetable, Enhydra Hingcha, kāla vegetable, vāstūka (a kind of vegetable), radish other than red, rock-salt and ocean-salt, curd and ghee obtained from a cow, milk from which water is not taken out, jack-fruit, green vegetable, Piper Longum, cumin-seeds, so also oranges and tamarind, plantain, lavali (a kind of creeper), Dhātrī, jaggery from any other object than sugarcane, that (food) which is not cooked in oil—the sages describe these as food for offering.

57b-59a. One should know even him who has flowers along with Tulasī-leaves etc., to be Viṣṇu. This is the truth (and) truth (only). There is no doubt about it. By planting Dhātrī-tree a man would be equal to Viṣṇu. One should know that the area round about it to the extent of three hundred cubits is Kurukṣetra.

59b-65. Having put round his neck a garland made with (pieces of) Tulasī-wood having the shape of rudrākṣa, a man should start the worship (of Viṣṇu). Similarly, the worshipper of Viṣṇu should carefully wear round his neck a garland of

āmalakas, or a good garland of lotuses, or that of kadamba-flowers; he should also put on his head flowers taken off after being offered (to Viṣṇu) and Tulasī-mālā. He should mark his body with flowers Taken off after being offered and sandal, with (the accompaniment of) his epithets. He should put (the mark of) a mace on his forehead, and (the marks of) a bow and an arrow. On the chest (he should put the mark of) the Nandaka (sword), and (the marks of) a conch and a disc on both the arms. If a brāhmaṇa endowed with (the marks) of a conch and a disc dies on the cremation ground, he certainly gets the same (highest) position which is said (to be obtained by dying) at Prayāga. He who being devoted to Viṣṇu, puts a Tulasī-leaf on his head, performs all his deeds, obtains an inexhaustible fruit.

66-68. The rites performed in honour of the dead ancestors and deities by one decorated with Tulasī-garlands, become a crorefold meritorious. The sin of that man who devoutly wears a garland made of Tulasī-wood, after offering it to Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu), perishes. Having worshipped (Viṣṇu) with water for washing the feet etc. he should utter this prayer: "Salutation to that Tulasī which, when seen, destroys the multitude of all sins; which, when touched, purifies the body; which, when saluted, removes diseases; which, when sprinkled, frightens Yama; which, when planted, bestows the vicinity of lord Kṛṣṇa; (and) when placed at his feet, gives the fruit (in the form) of salvation.

CHAPTER EIGHTY

Monthwise Rites Prescribed for a Viṣṇu Devotee

Pārvatī said:

1-2a. Then, how does (a man) survive, when the terrible Kali age, full of the alligators in the form of objects of senses, and having the distress in the form of a son, a wife and wealth,

has arrived, O lord? O great god, O treasure of kindness, tell the remedy for it.

The lord said:

2b-8. Kali does not harass them who always utter the name of Hari and Hari only, or the auspicious (utterance) 'Hare Rāma, Hare Kṛṣṇa' or 'Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa'. Doing (his) deeds one after another, a man should remember (Viṣṇu's) epithets. He repeatedly says, 'Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa'. He should also use your name and my name with inversion. He too would be free from sin as fire (goes away) from a heap of cotton. He who mutters my auspicious name with your name as 'Victory to the First One', or preceded by the word 'Śrī', is freed from the worldly existence. He should remember it by day, at night, in the evening—at all times. He, remembering Rāma day and night, sees Kṛṣṇa with his eyes. He being pure or impure, just by remembering always and at all times, (Viṣṇu's) name, is, just at that moment, freed from the worldly existence.

9-12. (Uttering) the name removes the sin of even him who is having many offences. In the Kali age a sacrifice, a vow, penance or charity is not complete in all parts. This couple—bath in Gaṅgā and Viṣṇu's name—is free from evil. O auspicious lady, horrible thousand sins connected with killing, (sin due to) cohabiting with crores of wives of preceptors, thefts and other (sins) do not take place due to the name 'Govinda' dear to Hari. He who is impure or pure or who is reduced to every condition, who remembers (Viṣṇu) of lotus-like eyes, is pure from within and without.

13-20a. By remembering his name or by reflecting on his feet he should start worshipping him by fashioning his image with gold, silver, flour or of the shape of a garland marked with his feet. He bears (the mark of) a disc at the root of his right thumb. He causes the end of the worldly existence of the man who bows there. Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu) bears a very beautiful mark of a lotus at the root of the middle finger, which attracts the bees in the form of the hearts of those who meditate (upon Viṣṇu).| Below the lotus he bears (the mark of) a flag, which is the victory-flag of all calamities. At the root of the small finger is the mark (like a diamond-pin) that breaks (i.e. destroys) the

stream of the sins of a devotee. In the side is a goad, the cause of joy in the devotee's heart. At the joint of the thumb he bears (the mark of) a barley-corn which is full of pleasures and riches. At the root (of the thumb) there is (the mark of) a mace breaking the mountain of sins of all men. The unborn lord also bears marks like lotuses etc. on the right (foot) to illumine all knowledge. The treasure of kindness would stand on the left foot and has (these marks).

20b-40a. Therefore, he who would always listen to or narrate the greatness of Govinda, which is charming due to the relish of joy, is fully free. There is no doubt about it. I shall (now) tell the rites (to be performed) in (different) months, which give delight to Viṣṇu. In Jyeṣṭha, one, being pure, should carefully bathe Śrī Viṣṇu. On the full-moon day (when this is done), daily sins, sins committed during the fortnight, the month, the season and the year, so also thousands (of sins like) killing a brāhmaṇa, those committed knowingly or unknowingly, (sins like) stealing gold, drinking liquor, violating the teacher's bed (i.e. wife), so also thousands of crores of minor sins—all these perish. One should sprinkle (the idol of) Acyuta on (its) head with water from a pitcher to the accompaniment of the hymn (called) *Puruṣasūkta* or (the group called) *Pāvamānī* hymns. (Or one should sprinkle the idol) with coconut water, or water from the tāla fruit, or fragrant water with gems put into it or water offered with flowers. Having propitiated (Viṣṇu) with the five articles of worship, according to (one's) expanse of wealth, one should offer the musical instrument viz. bell, saying, 'Gham, salutation to Ghaṇṭā'. 'I am fallen into the heat of sins put along the great path'. 'Protect me, a sinner—falling into the ocean of the terrible mundane existence'. A learned brāhmaṇa, pure and wise, who does like this, is freed from all sins, and he goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. One should celebrate the great festival of (Viṣṇu's going to) sleep on the eleventh day of the bright half of Āṣāḍha. In Āṣāḍha one should take out (Viṣṇu's) chariot (in procession). In Śrāvaṇa one should perform the ceremony called Śrāvaṇa-vidhi (performed on the full-moon day). He should be intent on a fast on (Viṣṇu's) birthday in Bhādrapada. In the month of Āśvina, one should perform the ceremony of (Viṣṇu's) turning to another side. One

should (also) perform (the ceremony of) Śrī Hari's getting up. Otherwise he will be a traitor to Viṣṇu. In the auspicious Āśvina month one should worship the golden or silver (idol of) Mahāmāyā of the form of Viṣṇu, without making an oblation. A religious-minded worshipper of Viṣṇu should not indulge in killing or hating (anyone). In the months of Kārtika and Pauṣa one should perform (deeds of) religious merit according to his desire. One should also offer a lamp (kept) on a high place to Dāmodara. The lamp should be of the size of four fingers and should have seven wicks. At the end of the fortnight one should arrange an auspicious row of lamps. In the bright half of Mārgaśīrṣa, on the sixth day, one should, with (i.e. having put on) white garments, worship the lord of the world, particularly Brahmā. In Pauṣa one should sprinkle (water over the idol) with flowers. One should avoid loose sandal(-paste). On the Saṁkrānti day and in the month of Māgha one should make an offering of food made from fragrant rice to Viṣṇu, and should recite this prayer. One should also feed brāhmaṇas residing in the city of the god of gods. One should (also) honour Viṣṇu's devotees and brāhmaṇas looking upon them as the lord. When one devotee is fed, a crore of them are fed. Merely by feeding brāhmaṇas a deficient (deed) certainly becomes complete.

40b-45a. On the fifth day in the bright fortnight one should bathe (the idol of) Keśava, worship it duly with fruits and powders, along with young leaves of mango trees, and with fine, fragrant garments. The house should be (rendered) charming, should be bright and illumined with lights. It should have grapes, sugarcanes, plantain-trees, jambīra, nāgaraṅga, nut-trees, coconuts, dhātrī, jackfruits, and green vegetables. (It should be decorated) with portions of other trees, with flowers of all seasons, with other various fruits and flowers, with canopies, with abundant flowers and pitchers full of water, with branches and twigs of mango-trees and with umbrellas and chowries.

45b-57a. The festival of the swing is laid down after remembering (Kṛṣṇa) with the words 'Victory to Kṛṣṇa' and after going round (the idol)—especially in the Kali age (it is celebrated) on the fourteenth day in Phālguna (at the time) called Yāma. Or one should devoutly and duly worship (the idol) with four kinds

of powders of figs on the full-moon day on the first day at a time called sandhi. One should please the highest lord with white and red (articles), white and yellow (articles), and (articles) mixed with camphor etc.; so also with (articles) having lovely colour and form due to the colour of turmeric. Or one should please the highest lord with (articles) having other colours and forms. One should start (the festival) on the eleventh day and finish it on the fifth day. The swing-festival is laid down (to last for) five days or three days. Men, seeing Kṛṣṇa facing the south and swinging, get free from heaps of sins. There is no doubt about it. A man should, in the month of Caitra, put the deity rising from (i.e. present in) Śālagrāma, in a pot containing water or in a golden, silver, copper or earthen vessel and should worship him while (the idol) is in water. Or, O magnanimous one, he should worship his image. His religious merit cannot be measured. Having planted the damana (tree), he should offer (the leaves of) it to Śrī Viṣṇu. He should offer it in Vaiśākha or Śrāvaṇa or Bhādrapada. While offering damana etc. he should do so in the foremost sheltered place; otherwise it is fruitless. On the third day of Vaiśākha he should get fashioned (the idol of Viṣṇu) especially in water or in a circle or in a pavilion in a big grove. Day by day he should nourish it well with fragrant sandal. With care as he can bestow, he should do it, which gives nourishment.

57b-66. They recognise these things to be Viṣṇu's Gandhāṣṭaka 'eight fragrances'—sandal, agaru (a kind of sandal), hrībera, black saffron, rocanā (a kind of yellow pigment), jaṭāmāṁsī (a kind of black pigment), murā. With these particular (articles) he should smear the body (i.e. the idol) of Viṣṇu. Rubbed Tulasī-wood with camphor and agaru or used with filaments of flowers is called haricandana. The men who, at the time of pilgrimage, see Kṛṣṇa (i.e. his idol) with devotion, are not reborn even after hundreds of crores of kalpas, (so also those) who put (i.e. bathe the idol with) water mixed with fragrant articles. Or having gone to Vṛndāvana, having put in the midst of flowers (the idol of) the lord of the world, and having decorated (it), he should make a worthy devotee of Viṣṇu enjoy (all) that fully. He should pluck a coconut or the seed-vessel of a lotus and offer it (to the deity), so also jujube fruit, bread-fruit, after removing the cover.

He should also cause to be offered food mixed with curd, after dipping it into ghee. He should also cause to be offered cooked flour, cake with ghee, so also ripe fruit with oil mixed with sesamum (-seeds). He should give whatever is dear to himself. Having offered (an article) he should never take it back; especially that which is intended for Viṣṇu and given to his devotees.

67-69. O Mahesvarī, O Pārvatī, I have told you something in brief. You should protect it like your own vulva. When there is this section (giving) instruction in the class of sacred texts describing the form and virtues of Śrīkṛṣṇa, enough of other texts. When the (devotee's) mind is (fixed) on the necklace of love (for him), interest (in him), devotion (to him) and his sports and names, what is the use of beautiful women? With heart worship that lord of the children in Vraja, the ground of Vṛndāvana, water of Yamunā; a body smeared with dust of the lotus-like feet of the lord of the world (is better than one smeared with) agaru, sandal etc. which are indeed vain.

CHAPTER EIGHTYONE

Mantracintāmaṇi for Devotees of Kṛṣṇa

The sages said:

1-3. O Sūta, O good one, live long. You have disclosed the nectar of the deeds of Śrīkṛṣṇa, which emancipates all devotees from the mundane existence. O lord, tell (us) all the daily sports of Śrīkṛṣṇa, on hearing which devotion to Kṛṣṇa increases, O good man. O glorious one, tell us separately the application and characteristic of the prayer of the teacher and the disciple; for, you are our great friend.

Sūta said:

4. Once Nārada saluted and said to the lord of the world, the god of gods, Sadāśiva, seated on the bank of Yamunā.

Nārada said:

5-10. O god of gods, O great god, O omniscient one, O lord of the world, O you who know the truth about the characteristics of the lord, O you best among those who know the prayers of (i.e. addressed to) Kṛṣṇa, I secured great prayers (addressed) to Kṛṣṇa from you and from my father. Those best prayers and others have been properly learnt by me eating vegetables, roots and fruits for many thousand years, subsisting on dry leaves, water, air etc. or (sometimes) not eating (at all), avoiding looking at and talking to women, conquering the six qualities like lust, curbing the external organs. Even though this was done, O Śaṅkara, my mind was not pleased. Therefore, O lord, tell me that which would succeed even without purificatory rites etc., and which gives an excellent fruit just by uttering it even once. O lord of gods, if (you think) I am fit, then please tell it to me.

Śiva said:

11-16. O glorious one, you, desiring the welfare of the world, have asked well. I shall tell you the prayer—the gem yielding all desires, though it is to be well (i.e. carefully) protected. This is the secret of secrets and the excellent secret of secrets. I have never before told it to the goddess (i.e. Pārvatī) nor to your elder brothers. I shall tell you the excellent pair of prayers (addressed) to Kṛṣṇa. The pair is called *Mantracintāmaṇi*—the desire-yielding gem. There are alternatives to this prayer—so also the five-syllabled (prayer). Beginning with (the words) 'Gopījana' and ending with 'Vallabha' and 'I seek the refuge' —This is the five-lettered (prayer). The great prayer of sixteen letters is called the *Mantracintāmaṇi*. Saying 'Gopījana' first, he should then say 'Vallabhābhyām'. The prayer having two lines is said to be (having) ten letters.

17-22. Having internally repeated with or without faith, (just) once, he would go to the proximity of those dear to Kṛṣṇa. There is no doubt about this. For him there is no (need for) the consideration for an initiatory rite, no (need for) the order of rite of nyāsa, no restriction about place or time, no requital of an enemy or a friend etc. O best sage, all are entitled

to it (even) up to a cāṇḍāla. So also women, śūdra and others, the dull, the dumb and the lame. Others (like) the Hūṇas, Kirātas, Pulindas and Puṣkaras, Ābhīras, Yavanas, Kaṅkas, Khasa and others, so also other low-born ones, those having much religious hypocrisy and egotism, those given to wickedness, killers of cows and brāhmaṇas, those having (committed) major and minor sins, those without knowledge and detachment, those without learning etc.—these and others—all are entitled to the prayer.

23-25. O best sage, if these have devotion to Kṛṣṇa, the god of all gods, then all of them are entitled; not otherwise. A performer of sacrifices, one engaged in giving gifts, one practising all regular orders of ceremonies and rites, one who speaks the truth, or an ascetic, master of Vedas and Vedāṅgas, one intent upon the contemplation of the Supreme Being, one born in a noble family, one practising austerities, one engaged in vows—is not entitled to this (hymn) if he does not have devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

26-28a. Therefore, it should not be told to him who is not a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, who is ungrateful, who is proud, who is faithless, and who is an atheist; so also it should not be told to him who is not desirous of attending, or to him who does not serve Śiva. This (prayer) should be carefully given to him who is a devotee of Kṛṣṇa only, free from religious hypocrisy and greed, free from lust and anger.

28b-33. I am the inspired poet (i.e. the author) of it, and its metre is said to be Gāyatrī. The lover of the cowherdesses (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) is said to be the deity of this hymn. Its application is said to be to the service of Hari with his beloved. A man should employ the five modes (of devotion) beginning with the disc etc. and hymns also, or he should practise the assignment of the hands and body with the mystical letter forming its essential part. The first letter of the hymn is decorated at the top with a dot. The mystical letter would be 'gem' here, and the power is said to be 'namaḥ'. In the last syllable there are ten parts, and worship is to be done with them, so also with sandal and flowers, with water in their absence. It should be done (i.e. muttered) after first doing the assignment of the various parts

of the body to different deities for pleasing Hari. Therefore, only others tell the nyāsa etc. of this hymn.

34-35a. Even if it is recited once it bestows blessedness. Yet one should always assign in ten ways for the muttered (hymn) etc. O best brāhmaṇa, now I shall explain (to you) the meditation of this prayer:

35b-43. (A man) should remember Kṛṣṇa seated, along with his beloved, on a throne in Vṛndāraṇya—Kṛṣṇa, who has put on a yellow garment, who is dark like a cloud, who has two arms, who has put on a garland of sylvan (flowers), who has a chaplet made of peacocks' tail-feathers, whose face resembles a crore of moons, whose eyes are rolling about; who has a karṇikāra (flower) as the ear-ornament, who has a round dot put on the centre of his forehead which is all around (smeared) with sandal, who is shining with ear-rings resembling the young sun, whose cheeks are like mirrors as they are glittering with drops of perspiration, whose eyes are rivetted on his beloved's face, who has sportively raised his brow due to a side-glance, whose very high nose is shining due to pearls put on its top, whose lips like ripe bimba fruits are shining by means of the moonlight (shooting) from his teeth, whose hands are shining with ornaments worn on the upper arms, with armlets and rings set with good (i.e. bright) gems, who holds in his left hand a flute, so also a lotus, whose waist is shining with a girdle and a chaplet, whose feet are glittering due to anklets, who is agile in the flurry caused by the joy due to love-sports, whose eyes are unsteady, who is laughing with his beloved and who is repeatedly making her laugh (thus he should remember Kṛṣṇa).

44-52a. Then he should remember Rādhikā who is seated to his left side, who has put on a blue bodice, whose lustre is like heated gold, whose lotus-like, very smiling face is half covered with the end of her garment, who has fixed her eyes on the face of her lover, whose eyes are unsteady like those of a cakorī, who is putting with her thumb and fore-finger a nut along with a (betal) leaf and powder into her lover's mouth, whose lovely, plump and elevated breasts are glittering due to a necklace of pearls, who has a slender waist, whose buttocks are large and are adorned with a mass of small bells, who has put on large jewelled ear-rings, armlets, rings and bracelets, who has

put on a jingling string, anklets and jewelled foot-rings, whose body is bewitching due to her being an essence of beauty, who is beautiful in all limbs, who is submerged in the water of joy, who is pleased, who has fresh youth. O best of brāhmaṇas, there also are her friends who are of the same age and have the same qualities, and would be engaged in serving her with chowries and fans. Now, O Nārada, I shall tell you the meaning of the prayer; listen to it. Rādhikā, the beloved of Kṛṣṇa is called Gopī due to her being concealed by the external parts of the manifestation (of the world), her own parts like the powers of illusion etc., so also with the internal parts, always present, like intelligence etc.

52b-56a. The goddess, full of Kṛṣṇa, and the highest deity is called Rādhikā. She is of the nature of all beauty and of the nature of Kṛṣṇa's joy. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, she is called Hlādinī by the wise. Durgā and others having the three constituents (like Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas) are a part of the croreth portion of her. She is actually Mahālakṣmī, and Kṛṣṇa is lord Nārāyaṇa. O best sage, there is not the slightest difference between the two. She is Durgā (i.e. Pārvatī); Hari is Rudra. Kṛṣṇa is Indra; she is Indrāṇī. She is Sāvitrī; Hari is Brahmā. She is Dhūmorṇā; Hari is Yama.

56b-60a. O best sage, what is the use of (speaking) much? There is nothing of the nature of living or non-living that is without them. The whole world is full of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. In this way, O Nārada, that all (this) is the splendour of the two. It is not possible for me to describe it even (if I do so) for hundreds of crores of years. In the three worlds the earth is venerable; Jambudvīpa is better than it. In it Bhārata country (is excellent); in it the city Mathurā (is the best). In it the (grove) named Vṛndāvana (is excellent); in it the group of Rādhā's friends is excellent. In it Rādhikā is the best.

60b-66. Due to her proximity, superiority in successions of the earth etc. would be there. Nothing else is lofty here. This is that Rādhā. The cowherdesses are the group of her friends. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are dear chiefs of the lives of the group of her friends. In this world, their feet should be sought for refuge. I go to them, have gone to them; I the soul that is very much afflicted, have sought their refuge; whatever is mine is his. All (I offer) to them, is for

them; it is to be enjoyed by them; it is not mine. O brāhmaṇa, this in brief is told (as) the meaning of the prayer. I have told the five alternatives as: the meaning of the couplet, nyāsa, reaching them and taking shelter of them, offering oneself. This hymn alone should be carefully reflected upon day and night.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTWO

The Greatness of Vṛndāvana

Śiva said:

1-4. O Nārada, I shall now accurately tell the rite of initiation. Listen to it. Even without doing it a man would be freed just by listening to it. The wise one, realising that all this world from Brahmā is evanescent, having experienced the threefold misery like that of the mind, and due to all pleasures being transitory, putting them on the side of (i.e. looking upon them as) misery, and being free from them, and being detached should think about the means of the cessation of the worldly existence. He should be very much satisfied to obtain highest happiness.

5-8. The very intelligent one knowing the wickedness of men, being very much afflicted, should, O brāhmaṇa, seek refuge of me, the great one. A teacher is said to be calm, free from jealousy, devoted to Kṛṣṇa, having no other aim (than reaching Kṛṣṇa), having no other means, having virtue, free from lust and greed, knowing the truth in the interest in Śrīkṛṣṇa, the best among those who know prayers (addressed) to Kṛṣṇa, always resorting and attached to prayers of (i.e. addressed to) Kṛṣṇa, always pure, teaching good ways of life, always prescribing good practices, following the tradition, full of compassion and detached.

9-10. A disciple is said to be one who has mostly these qualities and who is desirous of serving his teacher's feet, who is extremely devoted to his teacher, and who desires salvation. The actual service offered to him through love is said to be the

salvation of the Vaiṣṇavite by the wise knowing the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas.

11-18. Having resorted to the feet of one's teacher one should tell him one's account. He (i.e. the teacher) removing doubts, repeatedly instructing him, should, with a very much delighted heart, teach the other one (i.e. the disciple) who has bowed down to his feet, who is calm and who desires to serve his feet. O brāhmaṇa, on the left and right shoulder-blades he should draw, with sandal or clay, a conch and a disc. In the same way he should then draw, according to the rules, the upright mark on the forehead etc. Then he (i.e. the teacher) should indicate (i.e. whisper) the two prayers into his right ear. Then in proper order and properly he should tell him the meaning of the prayers. He should carefully give him a name along with the word *dāsa*. Then the wise one should affectionately feed the devotees of Viṣṇu. He should also honour his honourable teacher with garments, ornaments etc. O great sage, he should give all his possessions to the teacher or half their number. The poor ones should even remain after throwing down their bodies (i.e. should throw down their own bodies) for the teacher. The wise one who is consecrated with these five sacred rites, shares the service of Kṛṣṇa; not otherwise even for crores of kalpas.

19-21. The former learned ones have described these to be the five sacred rites: marking (the body with mark of a conch etc.), the upright mark, the prayer, taking up a name and the fifth one is sacrifice. Marking is (done) with a conch, a disc etc.; the upright mark is said to have a hole; name is connected with the word *dāsa*; the prayers are two. Sacrifice is the worship of the teacher and a devotee of Viṣṇu. I have told you these five great sacred rites.

22-24. O Nārada, I shall now tell you the duties of those who have taken refuge (with Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu), resorting to which men will go to Viṣṇu's abode in Kali (age). A wise one, having thus obtained the hymn from his teacher, and greatly devoted to his teacher, serving the teacher every day, would obtain his favour. Then he should learn the duties of the good, especially of those who have taken refuge (with Viṣṇu). He should always

gratify the devotees of Viṣṇu looking upon them as his own desired deity.

25-27. As women due to being the objects of enjoyment by lustful persons get beating and reproach, in the same way the wise ones should get the respective things of the devotees of Viṣṇu. They should never worry about worldly things or things in the next world. The worldly things always come according to the deeds done in the former (existence). In the same way Kṛṣṇa will bring about the things in the next world. Therefore, men should always give up (making) effort for them.

28-32. All expedients should be given up and Kṛṣṇa should be worshipped thinking oneself to be Kṛṣṇa. As a woman devoted to her husband and loving him, is afflicted when the lover has gone on a journey for a long time, and as she, desiring his company only, would always think about his qualities and sings and listens to them (i.e. qualities), so he should think of the qualities and sports of Śrīkṛṣṇa. It should never be adopted as a means (to reaching Kṛṣṇa). As the woman (devoted to her husband) kisses, embraces, and drinks with the corner of her eye, her husband looking upon him as her lover who has come after travelling for a long time, in the same way a devotee should serve Hari with adoration.

33-37. He (should) never seek the refuge of anyone else; he should never have any other means. Because of his having no other means he would have no other aim (than Viṣṇu). He should not worship any other deity; should not bow to or remember any other deity. He should never see or sing about or censure (any other deity). He should not eat what is left over by another person. He should not wear what is given up by another person. He should avoid talking to or saluting those who are not devotees of Viṣṇu. He should cover his ears and go. If he has power he should punish (the person censuring these deities). O brāhmaṇa, I think that he, resorting to the course of a cātaka till the body falls, should concentrate on the meaning of the two (hymns).

38-46. As a cātaka, when thirsty, abandons a lake, a river, a sea etc. and either dies or appeals to a cloud, in the same way a man should think about the means. He should always solicit his desired deity, saying 'You should be my recourse'. He should

always remain in (i.e seek) the favour of his deity, those belonging to the deity, and especially of the teacher also; and should avoid their disfavour. I who have sought their refuge once, will tell about their propitiousness. Thinking 'these two will emancipate me', he should have faith in them. "O lord(s), you who destroy the fear of him who has taken your refuge, are the saviour (of your devotee) from the worldly existence, and from friends, sons, home and family. Who I am, whatever I have in this and the next world, all that I have today dedicated to your feet. I am the abode of sins; I have given up the means; I have no (other) course; therefore, O lord, you alone are my recourse. O lover of Rādhikā, through my acts, mind and speech, I am yours. O Kṛṣṇa's beloved, I belong to you. You two only are my refuge. O you heaps and mines of compassion, I have sought your shelter. Favour (me) by (giving) me, the wicked and sinful one, (the opportunity) of serving (you)".

47-50a. Thus, muttering to himself these five verses, he, desiring their service, should quickly remain (thinking about Kṛṣṇa), O best sage. I have briefly described these external qualities. Now I shall describe the essential, internal quality of those who have sought refuge (with Kṛṣṇa). Having, with effort, resorted to the condition of the friend of Kṛṣṇa's beloved, he should carefully serve both of them day and night. I have told (you) the hymn, the constituents of it and (about) those who are entitled to it.

50b-59. I have described their duties, the fruit of the hymn (accruing) to them. O Nārada you (should) also do it. You will obtain their servantship (*dāsya*). O brāhmaṇa, here there is never a doubt about the (consequent) loss of one's authority (ego?). I have no doubt that Hari would grant his (servantship) to him who has but once sought his refuge, and who has appealed to him, saying, 'I am yours'. Now I shall tell you a great, wonderful secret which formerly I had heard from lord Kṛṣṇa himself. O best sage, I have told you the secret course of conduct. This is more secret than a secret; it has to be guarded carefully. Formerly, muttering this gem of a hymn and pondering over god Nārāyaṇa, I lived on the top of Kailāsa in a dense forest. Then the lord was pleased and appeared before me. "Choose a boon". When this was said (by him), I too opened my eyes and saw the

god with his wife and seated upon Garuḍa. Having saluted the lord of Kamalā, the giver of boons, I said to him: "O ocean of compassion, O highest god, I desire to see with my eyes that form of yours which gives great joy, which is the abode of joy, which is eternal, which is embodied, which is superior to everything (else), which is qualityless, actionless, calm, and which the wise know as Brahman."

60-64. Then, the glorious lord of Kamalā said to me who had sought his refuge: "Today you will see that form (of mine) which is desired in (i.e. by) your mind. Go to my Vṛndāvana, to the western bank of Yamunā." Saying so, the lord of the world vanished along with his beloved. Then I also came to the auspicious bank of Yamunā. There I saw Kṛṣṇa, the lord of all gods, who had put on the dress of a cowherd, who was lovely, who was of the age of a boy, who had properly put his charming left hand on the shoulder of his beloved, who was laughing and making her laugh in the group of the cowherdesses, who was bright like a glossy cloud, who is the abode of auspicious qualities.

65-73a. Then, having laughed, Kṛṣṇa, speaking (sweetly) like nectar, said to me: "O Rudra, having known your desire, I have appeared before you, since you have today seen this uncommon form of mine, which is the embodiment of spotless love that is solidified and of goodness, intelligence and joy (i.e. Brahman), which is (at the same time) formless, qualityless, (all-)pervading, actionless, and higher than the highest. The groups of the Upaniṣads describe this faultless form of mine only. Because my qualities have not sprung from the constituents of Prakṛti, and because of their being endless, and because of their not being effected, they call me the qualityless lord. O Maheśvara (i.e. Śiva), because this form of mine is not visible to the physical eyes, all the Vedas describe me to be formless. The wise ones also know me to be Brahman, as a part of the supreme spirit, because of my (all-)prevading nature. As I am not the agent of the visible world, they (also) call me actionless; since my portions through power of Māyā perform creation etc., I do not myself perform creation etc., O Śiva. O Mahādeva, I am overcome with the love of these cowherdesses. I do

not know any other act, even myself, O Nārada(?). Being influenced by her love, I always sport with her.

73b-79. Know this my beloved Rādhikā to be a great deity. Around her see her friends in hundreds and thousands. O Rudra, they are eternal as I having an eternal body. The cowherds, cows, cowherdesses and this my Vṛndāvana always (exist). All this is eternal, and full of the joy of intelligence. Know this called Ānandakanda ('the root of delight') to be my Vṛndāvana, merely by entering which a man would not again get into the worldly existence. The fool who, after having reached my grove, goes elsewhere, would be self-killer only. I have told the truth and the truth (only). I never leave Vṛndāvana and go anywhere else. With her I always live here only. O Rudra, I have thus told everything (I) had in mind. Tell me now, what else do you want to hear."

80-88. O best sage, then I said to the god: "Tell me the means by which you would be obtaind like this." Then the lord said to me: "O Rudra, you have spoken well. This is a very great secret, (and) it is to be guarded carefully. The man who has once sought our refuge, worships us, after giving up (other) means, as a cowherdess, comes to me, O lord of gods. He who has sought the refuge of the two of us, or only of my beloved, and serves us or her with unswerving devotion, comes to me. There is no doubt about it. O Maheśvara, he who has sought my refuge and of my beloved, undoubtedly comes to me. Thus I have told you. He who has but once sought (our) refuge and would say, 'I am yours', comes to me without any (other) means. There is no doubt about it. Therefore, with all efforts a man should seek the refuge of my beloved. O Rudra, having resorted to my beloved, you can impress me. I have told you this great secret. O Mahādeva, you have also to guard it carefully. You too, having resorted to this my beloved Rādhikā, and muttering this couple of hymns, always live in my abode."

Śiva said:

89-91. Having thus spoken, and having taught the great hymn, and sacred rites into my right ear, Kṛṣṇa, the treasure of compassion, disappeared along with attendants there only when I was looking (at him). Since then I have been constantly

here. I have fully told you all this. Now, O best brāhmaṇa, tell me what more you want to hear.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTHREE

Kṛṣṇa's Love Sports in Vṛndāvana

Nārada said:

1. O lord, O great one, you have told me whatever I had asked (for). Now I desire to know the excellent path of devotion.

Śiva said:

2-11. O brāhmaṇa, you, desiring the well-being of all the worlds, have asked well. I shall tell you the secret also. Listen as I (shall) tell it to you. O greatest sage, the maid-servants, friends, parents and beloveds of Hari live here. All of them are eternal and virtuous. As they are described in the Purāṇas (indulging) in open sports, in the same way they remain in sports on the Vṛndāvana ground. They always go from the grove to the cow-pen and come back. They, along with their friends, also graze the cows without any harm from the demons. Similarly people dear to him are proud of those having water-pitchers (the ascetics). With secret devotion they delight their beloved persons. A man should there look upon himself among them as one who is charming, who is endowed with beauty and youth, who is a young woman, who has the form of a young beautiful woman, who knows many crafts and arts, who is fit for Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment, who is averse to enjoyment though solicited by Kṛṣṇa, who is the follower of Rādhikā and who is devoted to serving her, who loves Rādhikā and who is devoted to serving her, who loves Rādhikā even more than Kṛṣṇa, who, through love, day by day brings about the union of the two (i.e. Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā), who is extremely happy due to the pleasure and joy of serving them. Thus looking upon oneself, one

should, beginning with the early part of the day till late night, offer service there.

Nārada said:

12. I desire to hear correctly the everyday sport of Hari. How can I mentally serve Hari without knowing his sport?

Śiva said:

13-14. O Nārada, I do not correctly know that sport. From here go to Vṛndādevī. She will tell you the sport. She, the attendant of Govinda, surrounded by the group of her friends, lives near Keśītīrtha, not far from here.

Sūta said:

15-16. Then the best sage Nārada, who was addressed like this, went round him, and being delighted, saluted him again and again and went to Vṛndāvana. Vṛndā too, seeing Nārada, repeatedly saluted him and asked the greatest sage, "How have you come here (i.e. what brings you here)?"

Nārada said:

17. I desire to hear from you (about) the daily life of Hari. O auspicious one, if I am fit, then tell it (to me) from the beginning.

Vṛndā said:

18-30. O Nārada, I shall also tell you the secret (since) you are a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. You too are not to disclose this great secret which is a greater secret than a secret (i.e. the greatest secret). In Vṛndāvana which is charming and adorned with fifty bowers, in a chamber with divine gems, in an arbour of the desire-yielding tree, the two embracing each other remain (in a) sleeping (position), though later they are awakened by birds obeying my orders. They have obtained great joy due to a close embrace and are afraid of its being disturbed. They do not at all desire to get up from the bed. Then they have to get up from their bed when awakened with various notes made on all sides and repeatedly by groups of sārikās and parrots etc. Seeing them

seated gladly on the bed, the friends enter (the bower) and offer the two service appropriate for that time. Then the two, having got up from the bed by the notes of sārikās, overcome with eagerness go to their respective houses. In the morning, Kṛṣṇa, awakened by his mother, quickly gets up, and having with Baladeva brushed his teeth and being allowed by his mother, goes, being surrounded by his friends, to the cowstall. O brāhmaṇa, Rādhā too, awakened by her friends, gets up from her bed, and having brushed her teeth would then smear her body with unctuous substances. Then she goes to the quandrangular for bath. There she is bathed by her friends. (Then) she would go to the chamber for decoration, and there her friends decorate her with ornaments and various divine fragrant flowers and unguents. Then when, with effort, her friends request her mother-in-law she is invited alongwith her friends by Yaśodā to cook good food.

Nārada said:

31. How is it, O goddess, that she is invited by Yaśodā to cook food, when there are foremost cooks like Rohiṇī?

Vṛndā said:

32-43. I have formerly heard from the mouth of Kātyāyanī that in olden days she was granted a boon by Durvāsas, O great sage. (The boon was:) "O respectable lady, the food which is cooked by you, would be, as a result of my favour, sweet and vying with nectar, and would in the same way promote long life of the eater (of it)." Therefore, Yaśodā, loving her son, everyday calls her thinking, 'my son, due to longing for sweet (food), would, (after eating it) live a long life.' Allowed by her mother-in-law, she, being delighted, would go to the house of Nanda. Going there with the multitude of her friends she cooks there also. Kṛṣṇa also, having milked the cows and having some others got milked by (other) men, comes home surrounded by his friends at the words (i.e. order) of his father. Having smeared his body with unctuous substances and having had shampooing and after being gladly bathed by servants, he puts on washed garments, a garland, and has his body smeared with sandal. With his neck and forehead shining due to the hair on

his head separated and tied at two places, with the hair reddened by the dot on the forehead resembling the moon, and shining, with his hands delightfully glittering with jewelled bracelets, armlets, and bracelets worn on the upper arm, with his chest shining due to a pearl necklace, having put on ear-rings resembling crocodiles, he, holding the hand of his friend, and being followed by Baladeva, would enter the dining hall, after being again and again called by his mother. Then, surrounded by his friends and brother, making them laugh by means of (anecdotes etc. causing) laughter, and himself laughing with them, he eats various kinds of food. Having thus eaten (food), having sipped (water), having rested on a cot for a while, and distributing and chewing the tāmbūla given by the servants, Kṛṣṇa, having put on the dress of a cowherd, with the flock of cows going ahead of him, followed on the path by all the residents of Vraja with love, having saluted his father and mother, and having sent back properly the host (following him) with a glance, would go to the forest.

44-52. Having entered the forest and having played there with his friends for a while, he then gladly sports there, in the forest by means of various pastimes. Then, having deceived all, and surrounded by two or three friends, he, being eager to see his beloved, would gladly go to the rendezvous. She too, who had come home, on seeing Kṛṣṇa, goes, after deceiving her elders, under the pretext of Sun-worship etc. or for collecting flowers, to the forest with a desire to meet her lover. Thus the two, having, after many efforts, met in the forest, gladly sport there for the (whole) day with various pastimes. Sometimes the two get upon a swing and are rocked to and fro by their friends. Sometimes, Hari, deceived by the bevies of his beloveds, is seen, searching his flute dropped from his hand, and hidden by his beloved. He, made to laugh by them by means of merriment, remains there. At times the two enter the forest endowed with vernal breezes, and sprinkle each other with water (mixed with) sandal, or with water (mixed with) saffron etc., released from syringes, or smear each other with mud. In the same way, the friends also sprinkle them (with water etc.) and the two also sprinkle them.

53-59a. Then the two, O brāhmaṇa, being tired due to

many pastimes proper for the time in the groves endowed with vernal breezes on all sides, resort, with their attendants, to the root of a tree, and sitting on a divine seat, drink liquor, O best sage. Then the two, intoxicated due to the liquor, with their eyes closed due to sleep, holding each other's hands, being under the influence of Cupid's arrows, and desiring to sport, enter, with their words and mind stumbling on the path. There they sport like a female elephant and (the male elephant,) the lord of the herd. All the friends also, intoxicated by wine, and with their eyes troubled by sleep (i.e. drowsy) sleep all around in the charming bowers. Again and again incited by his beloved, Kṛṣṇa, the lord, would go near all, with a separate body (for each) and simultaneously. Having satisfied all of them as a lord of elephants satisfies the female elephants, he would, along with his beloved and with them, go to the lake to sport.

59b-69. Then the two, with their attendants, sport between themselves by sprinkling water (on each other). They are adorned with garments, garlands, sandal(-pastes), and also with divine ornaments. O sage, I have there, in a chamber full of divine gems, on the bank of the lake, already arranged fruits and roots. Hari, having eaten first, and being clasped by his beloved, and being served by two or three (maids) would go to a bed made of flowers. There, being served (by them) with tāmbūlas, fans and shampooing of his feet, he laughing with them, and remembering his beloved rejoices. Rādhikā too, when Hari is asleep, extremely delighted along with her attendants, having put her heart into him, eats what is left over (by him). Having but eaten a little there, she would go to the bed-chamber to see her lover's face as the female cakora bird sees the moon. The maids there have told (her) about his having chewed the tāmbūla. She also chews tāmbūlas and distributes them among her dear friends. Kṛṣṇa too, desiring to hear their free mutual talk, though sleepless, covers himself with a piece of cloth, appearing as if he is asleep. Those too, looking at one another in jest, and getting the hint from somewhere, biting their tongues with their teeth, look at one another's face. Merged as it were into the ocean of bashfulness, they do not say anything for a moment. Just after a moment, having removed the piece of

cloth from his body, and saying 'You were really asleep' they laugh and make him laugh.

70-75. Thus sporting with the attendants by means (of jokes etc. causing) laughter, and having, for a moment, experienced the pleasure of sleep, he sits upon the seat gladly spread by his attendants, and the two having mutually staked necklaces, kisses, embraces and garments, play with dice preceded by jocular talk. Though defeated by his beloved he, saying, 'I have won', proceeds to seize her necklace etc. and is beaten by her. Thus beaten by her on his lotus-like face with her hand Kṛṣṇa, being dejected in his mind, thinks of going. "If, O honourable lady, I am defeated, then accept what is staked (viz.) kisses etc. offered by me." On his saying so she would act like that to see the crookedness of his eyebrows and to hear his words of reproach.

76-80. Then having heard the mutual wordy fight among the sārikās and the parrots, they two, desiring to go home, move out from that place. Having allowed his beloved (to go), Kṛṣṇa would go to the cows. She, accompanied by the circle of her world goes to the Sun's abode (temple). Having gone a little away from there, Hari, again, returning, after having put on the dress of a brāhmaṇa, goes to the Sun's abode. Requested by her friends, he would worship the Sun there, with Vedas (hymns), containing jokes and composed then only. Then the clever ones, having recognised their lover who makes himself known, merge in the ocean of joy, and do not know themselves or other (persons).

81-91a. Having thus passed two watches and a half in various sports, they would go home, and Kṛṣṇa would go (to the place) of the cows. O sage, Kṛṣṇa, joining his friends, and taking the cows from all sides, comes playing upon the flute joyfully to Vraja. Then, all like Nanda and others, so also women and children, hearing the sound of Hari's flute, and also seeing the sky full of dust (raised) by the cows, give up all their jobs, and being eager to see Kṛṣṇa go towards him. Kṛṣṇa also, joining all the residents of Vraja, on the royal path, at Vraja-gate—wherever they are—(honours all) as before in due order—by means of seeing them, touching them, speaking to them, looking them with a smile, saluting with words and physically the old cowherds, and saluting his parents and Rohiṇī also (in such a way that) the eight parts (of the body touch the ground),

O Nārada, so also his beloved with a modest side glance. Thus very much and properly respected by the residents of Vraja, having sent the cows to the cowstall, he goes, after being requested by his parents to his abode with his brother. Having bathed there, having drunk (milk), having eaten a little, and being allowed by his mother, he, with a desire to milk the cows, again goes to the cowstall. Having milked them, and got them milked, having made some of them drink (water), he, being followed by hundreds of venerable men goes home with his father.

91b-101a. There with his father, paternal uncles, their sons, and Baladeva, he eats various kinds of foods like those that are chewed, those that are sucked etc. Even before he entertains a desire, Rādhikā, through her friends, would send dressed foods to his house. Hari, praising them, and eating them with his father etc. would, with the bards, go to the assembly hall. The friends (of Rādhā), that had come there having brought with them many foods, take (from his house) many kinds (of food) given by Yaśodā there and also whatever is left over by Kṛṣṇa. Having brought all that, they inform Rādhikā of it. She too, along with her group of friends, having eaten it in order and being decorated by her friends, would be (ready) to meet by appointment (her lover i.e. Kṛṣṇa). 'From here or there some friend is sent away by me'. Met by her, she, surrounded by her friends, and having put on a dress proper for white (i.e. bright) or black (i.e. dark) night goes to the chamber having divine jewels, near Yamunā. Kṛṣṇa also, seeing their curious things, then having heard delightful music from Kātyāyanī, and having properly pleased them with (gifts of) wealth and grains, and propitiated by people, goes with his mother to the house of his friend.

101b-106a. When his mother departs, he, having eaten, comes here—to the rendezvous—unnoticed and with his beloved. Both of them meet here and play in the groves of trees, with many sports, with Kṛṣṇa's dance with the cowherdess, accompanied with singing and instrumental music and laughter. Thus having spent two watches and a half of the night in sporting, the two desiring to sleep, enter, unnoticed by female birds, the bower. There, in the solitary place, the two sleep on a charming bed made of flowers and for sport, and are served by their

female friends. Thus I have told you the full daily life of Hari. O Nārada, even sinners are freed on hearing it.

Nārada said:

106b-107a. O goddess, I am blessed; I am favoured by you. There is no doubt about it, since today you have disclosed to me the delightful sport of Hari.

Sūta said:

107b-111a. Saying so, going round her, and honoured by her also, Nārada, the best sage, vanished, O brāhmaṇa. I too have told you all (the account) in due order. One should daily carefully mutter this couple of prayers. Formerly Rudra obtained it with effort from Kṛṣṇa's mouth. He told it to Nārada; and Nārada told it to me. Prescribing the sacred rites like this, I have told it to you. You too have to guard this very wonderful secret.

Śaunaka said:

111b-112a. O great one, I have been actually contented by your favour, since you disclosed to me the secret of secrets (i.e. the greatest secret).

Sūta said:

112b-117. Practising these modes, and muttering the hymn day and night, you will soon obtain the position of his attendant. There is no doubt about it. O brāhmaṇa, I too have to go to the eternal abode of the supreme lord of lords on the bank of Yamunā. Those men who, full of devotion, listen to this glorious and very pure account narrated by Maheśa, go to the eternal place of Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu). It is excellent, it gives glory, promotes (long) life, health and gives desired success. It is the cause of the wealth in the form of heaven and salvation, and destroys sins. Those men, devoted to Viṣṇu, who everyday devoutly recite it, never come back from the heaven of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFOUR

Meditation of the Lord

The sages said:

1-5. O Sūta, O Sūta, O glorious, pleasing Romaharṣaṇa, you have told (us) a story giving delight to the world. O highly virtuous one, we have heard the entire, very wonderful life of Śrīkṛṣṇa, as you narrated it. We are pleased with it. Oh, since (the recital of) the glory of Śrikṛṣṇa gives (the highest) position (i.e. salvation) to the devotees, who would not then obtain joy by (listening to) it? Therefore, we again desire to hear the great account of Śrīkṛṣṇa, so also other vows, presents, worship or bath which were formerly done by whom and how. Tell all that in detail so that we would be satisfied.

Sūta said:

6-10a. O best brāhmaṇas, you have asked well about the great liberating (account). You whose minds are full of devotion to Kṛṣṇa are blessed. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall tell (you) the life of Kṛṣṇa, a great, excellent and auspicious tale which gives great delight to the good. Once the best sage Nārada, dear to the lord, while wandering over the worlds, saw in Mathurā the highly virtuous Ambarīṣa intent on a vow and engaged in worshipping Kṛṣṇa. That best sage, seeing the excellent sage having come (to him) welcomed him, and with his mind delighted, asked with faith as you (have done).

Ambarīṣa said:

10b-18. O sage, that which is said to be the highest Brahman by the teachers of the Veda, is that highest god Nārāyaṇa himself, having lotus-like eyes, who (though) unembodied, is the embodied lord, is manifest and unmanifest and is eternal. He is full of all beings; he is inconceivable. How should that Hari, in whom the whole world is sewn lengthwise and crosswise, in whom it remains, who is known as the only highest unmanifest one, and as the highest soul, from whom the origin etc. of the world takes place, who, having created Brahmā, gave him the Vedas

abiding in himself, be meditated upon? Please tell us how he who gives all objects of human pursuit, and who is inaccessible even to the meditating sages, is meditated upon. Those who have not propitiated Govinda, do not know the accomplishment of their well-being. He who has not tasted the drink from the lotus-like feet of Govinda does not get an excellent fruit of penance, sacrifice and gifts. He would not know the rich fruit which is beyond desires. O sage, I do not see a greater expiation for beings than the propitiation of Hari, which removes streams of sins, (of Hari) at the dance (i.e. knitting) of whose eyebrows all accomplishments are known to exist.

19-25a. How is that Keśava propitiated who removes affliction? How is that lord Nārāyaṇa waited upon by men? Being pleased, tell all this to me for the good of the world. By which devotion is this lord, to whom devotion is dear, pleased? How would devotion to him take place? How is he propitiated by all? You are a devotee of Viṣṇu; you are dear to him; you know the highest truth. Therefore, I ask you, O excellent brāhmaṇa knowing the Veda. A question about Kṛṣṇa purifies the listener, the speaker and the questioner, as the water from his feet does. For human beings, human body which is perishable, is difficult to obtain. There also, I think, the dear sight of Viṣṇu is difficult to have. In this worldly existence, company of the good even for half a moment is a treasure of men, from which all the four goals of human life can be secured.

25b-29a. O revered one, your journey is (meant for) the good of all human beings, as that of the parents is for (the good of) children (going) along the excellent path of fame. The life of gods leads to the happiness or unhappiness of living beings. But that of good men like you, who are not fallen, leads to happiness only. Gods honour them in the same way, as (men) honour them. The good men, loving the distressed, are the companions of the acts (of human beings) like their shadow(s). Therefore, O venerable one, teach (us) the way of life of a great devotee of Viṣṇu, by giving which instruction one gets the fruit due to the (study of the) Vedas.

Nārada said:

29b-48a. O king, you, having devotion for Viṣṇu, have ask-

ed well. You know that the highest duty is the one of serving Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu); that when Viṣṇu is propitiated everything is propitiated; that when that Hari full of (i.e. containing) all gods is pleased, the mobile and the immobile (world) is pleased; that by merely remembering Hari the heap of major sins perishes that moment only. Hari alone should be served. O king, who having senses and facing death on all sides, does not worship Mukunda's lotus-like feet which are the object of worship of the sages and deities? The powerful way of life of the good, when heard, studied, reflected upon, honoured and approved of, instantly purifies even those who seek to harm all. That Hari who is the cause even of the cause of the cause, effect etc., who is the unique cause, who is a meditating saint, who is the soul of the world, who is full of the world, who is subtle and gross, who is lean and strong, who is qualityless and has qualities, who is great, who is unborn, who is beyond birth and death, should always be reflected upon. O best among men, you have done this properly, since you are asking (me) about the practices of the followers of Viṣṇu, which promote the welfare of the universe. The spotless stories of Kṛṣṇa who deserves to be glorified, are due to their devotion, the elixir to the soul, mind and ears of the good. This god is to be obtained through devotion. You yourself know it. Yet I tell (about him) for the good of the world and through regard for you. He is Acyuta, whom they describe to be the highest Brahman, and beyond Pradhāna (i.e. Prakṛti) and Puruṣa, and who controls everything spread through (his) Māyā. The unconquered one, propitiated with devotion, would give everything desired like sons, wife, long life, kingdom and heaven or salvation. O best king, due to love for you, I shall tell you (about) the vows of those men who, through their deeds, mentally and through their speech are devoted to him. Harmlessness, truthfulness, non-stealing, celibacy, freedom from impurity—these are said to be mental vows in order to please Hari. O lord of men, eating once, eating at night (only), fasting, (eating what is had) without begging—this is said to be the bodily vow of men. Study of the Vedas, glorifying Viṣṇu, speaking the truth, absence of slandering—this, O king, is said to be the best vow of speech. A man should always and everywhere recite the names of (Viṣṇu), having the disc as his weapon. In

his glorification there should be no impurity, since he brings about purity. The highest man (Puruṣa), viz. Viṣṇu is propitiated by a man who follows the practices of castes and the (four) stages of human life. There is no other path causing delight. Vāsudeva, the treasure of compassion, is propitiated by means of vows and restraints of mind, speech and body by women to whom the good of their husbands is dear.

48b-52. Even women and śūdras should worship the moon-like Kṛṣṇa, having the excellent form of a brāhmaṇa, according to the manner laid down in sacred texts. The (first) three castes are engaged in worship according to the manner laid down in Vedas; women and śūdras etc. are intent on propitiating (Viṣṇu) by (uttering) his name. Mādhava is not pleased with worships, sacrifices, and even vows. He is said to be merely loving devotion. To women who are loyal wives, their husbands are their deities. The husband should be honoured with Viṣṇu's devotion (i.e. as much devotion as is shown towards Viṣṇu) by means of mental and physical acts and acts of speech. Acts pertaining to Viṣṇu should be performed by thinking (i.e. keeping) in mind the husband.

53-55. The worship of a deity by śūdras also is (done) by (uttering the deity's) name. All should do (the worship) according to the mode laid down in the sacred texts following the Veda. Even women engaged in doing what is dear to their husbands are entitled to the worship etc. of Viṣṇu. This is (what is laid down in) the ancient sacred texts. A man should practise the ritual laid down according to the mode proper for his family. By that Keśava is pleased.

56-60a. The wise worship Hari everyday in the fire with oblations, in water with flowers and in the heart with meditation, and in the Sun's orb with the muttering (of a prayer). Harmlessness is the first flower. Control of senses is the second flower. Compassion to beings is the third (flower); and forgiveness is the fourth (flower). Tranquillity is the fifth flower; restraint is the sixth (flower). Meditation is the seventh (flower). Truth is the eighth flower. Keśava is pleased with these. Hari is pleased only when worshipped with these eight flowers. O best of men, there are also other external flowers, using which Viṣṇu, when worshipped, is pleased.

60b-63a. (They are:) Water is a flower of Varuṇa. Ghee, milk and curd are a flower of Soma. Food etc. is a flower of Prajāpati. Incense and lamp are a flower of Agni. Fruits, flowers form the fifth flower and it is called Vānaspatya (i.e. of herbs). Kuśas, roots etc. form the Pārthiva flower (i.e. of the Earth). Fragrant substances and candana form the Vāyavya flower (i.e. of Vāyu). The flower of Viṣṇu is called faith; and a musical instrument is said to be the feet of Viṣṇu. When Viṣṇu is worshipped with these, he is pleased.

63b-69a. The sun, fire, a brāhmaṇa, cows, a devotee of Viṣṇu, the sky, the wind, the water, the earth, the soul—all these are the places of Viṣṇu's worship. A man should worship with a sacrifice, with the muttering of a hymn in the sun, with an oblation in fire, with hospitality towards an excellent brāhmaṇa, and with a mouthful of water etc. in (i.e. towards) a cow, with the good deeds of a brother in (i.e. towards) a devotee of Viṣṇu, with firm meditation in the heart, with the thought that Vāyu is the chief in Vāyu, with substances accompanied by water in water, with main parts of hymns on a bare ground, with enjoyments in the soul; and he should worship the individual supreme soul as being equal (i.e. the same) in all beings. On these subordinate altars his form is endowed with a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus; it has four arms; is calm. Being devout and reflecting upon the form he should worship it. When he is worshipped by brāhmaṇas, he is (properly) worshipped; there is no doubt about it. When, O king, the lord is censured by them he would be censured.

69b-74a. O brāhmaṇas, that form of Viṣṇu, due to whose support the Vedic texts and the code of laws proceed, is regarded as highly purifying. Everything that is auspicious in the world should be obtained through moral merit only. O king, from (the point of view of) the Vedic texts and the code of laws, moral merit alone is the recourse. Even of the two, the brāhmaṇas are the refuge on the earth. The lord of the world would be worshipped here (i.e. in the world) if he is worshipped by them. The lord, the god of gods, is not that pleased with sacrifices, austerities and meditation or worship as he is with the brāhmaṇas being pleased. A brāhmaṇa is well-versed in the Vedas; knows

the Vedas; promotes them. The lord would be pleased through brāhmaṇas, when the deity in the form of a brāhmaṇa is pleased.

74b-80. When a son worships Viṣṇu, his ancestors from both the families (i.e. of his father and his mother), though plunged in hell for a long time, just then go to heaven. What is the use of their life here or their acts like beasts, whose mind is not disposed to Vāsudeva full of the world? I shall tell (about) the meditation of him who is not seen by anyone. O king, listen to (the description of) the final emancipation which is unique and free from impurity. As a lamp in a place sheltered from wind, being free from wind, is steady and, O highly intelligent one, it, while burning, destroys all darkness, in the same way the soul is free from blemishes, is untainted, is devoid of hope, is steady, powerful, has no friend or foe. So also he does not have pain or pleasure, or dejection, or greed or jealousy or delusion. He is free from confused talks and attractions and from pleasure or pain. He is also free from all objects of senses. Then he becomes one who has absolute knowledge and beatitude is produced (in him).

81-87. O king of kings, a lamp, all alone and free from wind, would dry up, with the help of the wick, the oil due to its contact with the act of the flame. O highly intelligent one, later on it ejects soot of the lamp; a black line is seen. Having drawn up the oil it would be pure in lustre. Similarly, the soul remaining inside the body would dry up the oil in the form of (one's) deeds. Making the objects of senses the soot, he would himself illumine. Free from the breezes called wrath, greed etc. and being desireless and steady, he would brighten up his own lustre. Remaining in his own place, he sees the three worlds by means of his own lustre. I have described to you this (soul) that is of the form of absolute knowledge.

88-95. Those great souls, intent upon the knowledge about Brahman and endowed with abstract meditation, who do not see him, the omniscient one, manifesting everything are ignorant. Without hands and feet he moves everywhere; and grasps all the three worlds (with) the immovable and the movable. O king, bereft of nose and mouth he smells and eats. Without ears he hears everything. He, the lord of the world, is a witness to everything. (Though) formless, he is connected with a form; is under

the influence of the group of the five (senses). He who is the life of the entire world, is worshipped by the movable and the immovable. Tongueless, he speaks everything as (laid down) in the Vedas and the sacred texts. Though skinless, he gets the touch of all. He is always joyful; has a judicious eye; has one form; and no prop. He is qualityless; does not have the feeling of mineness; pervades (everything); has qualities; is spotless and sinless. He is not influenced by anyone; everything is under his influence; he gives everything; he is the best among the omniscient; he does not have a mother; the mighty one is full of everything. He who, not having any other thought, meditates thus on him full of everything, goes to the formless highest place resembling nectar.

96-109. I shall tell you another (meditation). O very intelligent one, listen to it. O prince he is called Vāsudeva, since the matchless universe, having an embodied form, having a form and formless and pure is perfumed by his dwelling (in it). He has that lustre which would be the one of a showering cloud. In the right hand of him who resembles the sun in lustre, who has four arms, and who is the lord of gods, shines a conch decorated with gold and jewels. O brave one, in the left hand of that magnanimous one shines the Kaumodakī mace which destroys great demons. In his right hand is a great lotus rich in fragrance. It always shines with a weapon and the beauty of the lotus. His neck is like a conch; he has a round face; his eyes are like lotus-petals; he, Hṛṣīkeśa, is shining with teeth like kunda(-petals). The lower lip of Guḍākeśa resembles a coral. He, having eyes like lotuses, looks charming due to a bright crown. Janārdana shines with large, charming chest, marked with Kaustubha only. He also shines with ear-rings resembling the sun in lustre. Hari always shines with the auspicious mark of Śrīvatsa. The best among the victorious shining with armlets, bracelets, necklaces and pearls (bright) like stars, and with his body, is victorious. That Govinda also shines with a garment resembling gold. He shines with rings on his fingers. Hari, endowed with all, complete and divine weapons and ornaments, mounted upon (Garuḍa) the son of Vinatā, is the creator of the worlds and the lord of the world. A man who, with a concentrated mind, meditates upon him, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

I have thus completely told you about the meditation of the lord of the world.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFIVE

Greatness of Vaiśākha

Ambarīṣa said:

1-2. Well (done), well (done), O greatest sage who favour the world, since you told (me about) the meditation of Viṣṇu, with and without qualities. O you who favour the good, now explain (to me) devotion—of what kinds (it is), by whom (it is done), how (it is done), where (it is done), and when (it is done).

Sūta said:

3-4a. Hearing these words uttered by the best king, the delighted sage again spoke to the king: "O king, listen; I shall (now) properly tell you (about) devotion to Hari, which removes all sins. (Now) I shall tell you (about) devotion of various kinds, which destroys sins.

4b-13a. Devotion is said to be of various kinds: mental, of speech and of body. It may also be (divided as) secular, Vedic and spiritual. Mental devotion is said to be the one in which recollection of the Vedas is done with the idea of having meditation and concentration which brings about devotion to Viṣṇu. That which is done through utterances of prayers and (hymns of) the Vedas, through untired reflections, and mutterings in the forest, is called verbal (devotion). That which accomplishes all objects and is done through vows, fasts, restraints and curbing of the five senses, is said to be physical (devotion). That devotion which is the worship done by men through (offerings made) with ornaments, marked (i.e. decked) with gold and jewels, so also with beautiful words, with ribbons of garments put round the waist, with large purifying fans, with dancing, musical instruments, songs, with all offerings and presents, with eatables, food and drinks, and which is intended

for Nārāyaṇa is said to be secular. The same, accomplishing all objects is said to be physical. That devotion in which mutterings of hymns from the Ṛgveda, Yajurveda and Sāmaveda are done, and studies of the hymnical texts of the Vedas are done with reference to Viṣṇu is said to be Vedic. (So also) the act (of devotion) done through the Vedic hymns, and sacrifices where offerings are made (into fire) is looked upon as Vedic (derived from the Vedas).

13b-18. Offering into fire should be done on the new-moon day and the full-moon day. (Offering) food, giving gifts, a sacrificial oblation made of ground rice and offered in a vessel, an oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled (and presented to) gods and manes, sacrifices, drinking Soma—are all sacrificial acts. All rites performed in honour of Fire, Earth, Wind, Sky, Light, Śaṅkara and the Sun, (reach) the deity Viṣṇu. O king, spiritual devotion is of various kinds: One is called Sāṁkhya; (another) has come up from Yoga. O king, listen as it is described. The principles like Pradhāna (i.e. Prakṛti), twentyfour in number, are insentient and are objects of enjoyment. The Puruṣa is the twentyfifth (principle) described to be sentient, and is the agent of acts and the enjoyer (of their fruits). The soul is eternal, immutable, controller, and employer. Puruṣa is unmanifest and eternal and Maheśvara would be the cause.

19-25. Really (there are three creations): Creation of principles, psychic creation and physical creation. The Pradhāna of the Sāṁkhya is of the nature of guṇas (constituents). The similarity and difference and that the Pradhāna is of a different nature should be known; so also the cause of Brahman is said to be desire. The being directed of the Pradhāna is said to be the difference. Brahman is all action; Puruṣa also has absence of action. This is said to be the similarity with the insentient Pradhāna. There is a difference among the principles, and they are related to one another as cause and effect. The wise who ponder over all true principles call it Sāṁkhya, knowing through the number of the principles, the employment and the state of being employed (of the principles). Knowing in this way its existence, and the number of principles correctly, the wise know that the physical principle is in addition to the principle of Brahman. This devotion formulated by the Sāṁkh-

yas is known as spiritual devotion. O king, I shall also tell you (about) the devotion, due to (i.e. in accordance with) the Yoga (school).

26-30. A man always given to controlling his breath, (always) reflecting and controlling his senses, eating what is obtained by begging, having controlled all senses, having reflected upon the mental representation (of Viṣṇu) in his heart, reflects upon the great god seated in the pericarp of the lotus of heart, wearing a yellow garment, and having charming eyes, and seeing (the lord) with a bright face, and having the sacred thread round his waist, of a white complexion, having four arms, and having the hand giving boons and fearlessness. This mental accomplishment due to Yoga is said to be great devotion to Viṣṇu. He who is thus devoted to the lord, is called Viṣṇu's devotee. O prince, I have thus explained various kinds of devotion, according to these divisions, viz. Sāttvikī (endowed with the quality of sattva or goodness), Rājasī (endowed with the quality of rajas or passion) and Tāmasī (endowed with the quality of tamas or darkness).

31-35. Many kinds should be known (of devotion) to Viṣṇu of unlimited lustre. As fire with highly blazing flames reduces fuel to ashes, in the same way devotion to the lord burns sins at that moment only. Till a man does not, on the earth, hear about devotion to Viṣṇu which is actually nectar, the essence of all other liquids, he obtains hundreds of striking afflictions (in the form) of old age, death, birth, due to many bodies (i.e. many existences). The endless lord, when described, when his fame is thought about, when his majestic lustre is heard (i.e. known) internally, destroys all sins, as wind does the clouds, or the sun does the darkness. The heart does not obtain that purity by means of gifts, worship, sacrifice, bath at a sacred place, behaving as laid down in sacred texts, and austerities, which it has when the eternal lord is in the heart. O lord of men, the stories are pure; they are true; these true stories about Hari are alone wholesome.

36-41. (As) these stories of him of a pure form are heard here by you whose good fame is heard, you are blessed. O brave king, you are the leader of the right path. Your heart is concentrated on Puruṣottama, since your firm heart, your good

luck, have become prone to listening to the good deed of lord Śrīkṛṣṇa. O king, how can a self-respecting man have religious merit without propitiating with devotion Viṣṇu who grants boons and who is immutable? He, the guileless one, is born of illusion, and is won over through sincere devotion. You being a good man, know it yourself. O king, the truth about the way of life is not unknown to you. Yet you are asking me about the pure sacred place on this occasion. There is no greater sweetness than this, viz. the glorification of Viṣṇu's devotee. I do not see greater nourishment of delight and proper religious merit mutually (i.e. enhancing each other). The good having greater devotion very much enjoy his unlimited qualities, having unending religious merit.

42-47. Brāhmaṇas, a cow, truth faith, sacrifice, austerities, sacred texts, Smṛti-texts, compassion, initiation and tranquillity are the bodies of Hari. The lord (occupies) the sun, the moon, wind, earth, water, the sky, quarters, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra—is full of all beings. He, of the form of the universe, himself created this mobile and immobile world. Having entered (the body of) a brāhmaṇa, he himself always eats food. Therefore, worship the brāhmaṇas, the dust of whose feet is a sacred place, who are gods on the earth, the abode of the mountains, who are high-souled, who are all-in-all of the auspicious Lakṣmī, and the souls of all. He who properly looks upon a learned brāhmaṇa as Viṣṇu, and who is attached to his own duties, is alone the devotee of Viṣṇu. I have told a secret (to you). It is time for me to go and bathe in Gaṅgā. There is (now) no more time for the story (to be continued).

48-51. The auspicious month of Vaiśākha, dear to Mādhava, has come. In it also the seventh day (for bathing) in Gaṅgā is extremely difficult to get. Formerly on the seventh day of the bright half of Vaiśākha, Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā) was drunk through anger by Jahnu, and let out from the cavity of his right ear. A man should, after having bathed in her (water), propitiate Gaṅgā, the girdle of the sky, according to proper rites. Such a man is blessed and fortunate. A mortal (i.e. a man) who would, according to the proper rites, gratify deities and manes in her (water), would see (himself as) the one who has had ablution there, and whose sins have gone away.

52-59. There is no month like Vaiśākha; there is no river like Gaṅgā. Such a difficult combination is secured only through devotion to Hari. She (i.e. Gaṅgā) has sprung up from the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu; she came (down) from Brahmā's heaven. She is not tired (though flowing) in three streams, and she purifies the three worlds. She is a ladder for climbing to the heaven; she always gives joy; she removes the streams of many sins; she helps to surmount a difficulty. She remains in the twisted hair of Śiva. She removes grief. She destroys the lover's sport (i.e. lust) in the heart of the man who worships her. She is the cause of the emancipation of Sagara's family. She sustains Dharma (righteousness). The goddess moves along three paths; she adorns the worlds. By means of her sight, touch, bath (in her water), recital (of her virtues), reflection (on her) and resorting to her, she purifies, in thousands, virtuous and non-virtuous men. Even when those away from her say 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā' at dawn, noon and sunset, she destroys their sins earned (i.e. committed) during three existences. If a man at (a distance of) thousands of yojanas remembers Gaṅgā, he, even though a sinner, obtains the highest position (i.e. salvation).

60-67. Especially on the seventh day of the bright half of Vaiśākha, she is difficult to reach; (but) is obtained through the favour of the brāhmaṇa in the form of Hari, the protector of the world. There is no month like Vaiśākha; there is none so supreme as Mādhava (Viṣṇu or Vaiśākha). The stream of the water of the sins of him who dips (in Gaṅgā in Vaiśākha) is gone. O king, that which is given, uttered, offered, or the bath taken devoutly (in Gaṅgā) in the month of Vaiśākha, would become inexhaustible religious merit hundreds of crores of times more (that what is given etc.). As among gods is the soul of the universe, viz. god Nārāyaṇa Hari, (or) as Gāyatrī is among the muttered hymns, so is Jāhnavī among rivers. As Umā (i.e. Pārvatī) is (best) among all females, or as the sun is (best) among those that shine, as the gain of health is among gains, as Brāhmaṇa is among bipeds, as obliging others is among the acts of religious merit, as the Vedas are among lores, as Om is among the prayers, as self-reflection is among reflections, as truth and abiding by the rules of one's own class are superior to austeri-

ties, as purity about wealth is among purities, as grant of fearlessness is among gifts, as the end of greed is said to be the chief among virtues, in the same way the month of Vaiśākha is said to be the best among months.

68-77. The śrāddha (offered in it), (or) the sacrifice (performed in it), (or) the gift (given in it), (or) a fast (observed in it), so also austerities (practised) in it, or study or worship etc. done in it—all this is said to have inexhaustible fruit. Sins end in Vaiśākha; darkness ends with (the rise of) the Sun; harm done to others and wickedness end with good deeds. O king, all that bath, gifts etc. (done or given) in the month of Kārtika, when the Sun is in Libra, would be a parārdha-fold more (meritorious). Thousand times more (is the religious merit) when (bath etc. is had) in the month of Māgha when the Sun is in Aquarius. It is hundred times more when, in Vaiśākha, the Sun is in Aries. Those men who having bathed in the morning worship (Viṣṇu), the enemy of (the demon) Madhu, in the month of Vaiśākha, according to the proper rites, are fortunate and blessed. Taking morning bath in Vaiśākha, (offering) sacrifices, (giving) gifts, (observing) fasts, (offering) oblations, and practising celibacy (in Vaiśākha) destroy great sins. Again, O king, in Kaliyuga the greatness of Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) is to be kept secret (like) Aśvamedha etc. The meritorious Aśvamedha (i.e. the horse-sacrifice) does not take place in Kali (age). This rite of Vaiśākha is similar to that of Aśvamedha. The sinners of wicked minds do not realise in Kali (age) the religious merit of the horse-sacrifice, viz. attaining heaven and salvation. Men born in it being sinners, must go into the ocean of hell. Therefore its spread is made rare by him."

CHAPTER EIGHTYSIX

Acts to be Performed in Vaiśākha

Sūta said:

1. Hearing these words of the high-souled Nārada, the royal sage Ambarīṣa who was amazed, said (these) words:

Ambarīṣa said:

2-11. O great sage, leaving auspicious months like Mārgaśīrṣa etc. why do you praise Vaiśākha as the month superior to all (other) months? Why is Vaiśākha most dear to Viṣṇu? What are the rites (to be done) in it? What are the gifts (to be given)? What is the penance (to be practised) and the deities (to be invoked in it)? O sage, please be graceful by favour of your advice, to me who am purified by the dust of your lotus-like feet. O great sage, you alone know the way of life; you emancipate (men) on the ways of religious life. You know the entire truth, you teach the way of life. You are an author, you are an instructor; you are a thinker; you respect (others); you are an employer. O best sage, those who distribute equally, are remembered by those who know sacred texts. All that fruit which is obtained by vows, sacrificial sessions, penance, gifts, is obtained by (giving) instruction in the way of life. O sage, he who prompts another, is also the sharer of the fruit of a bath at a sacred place, penance, and sacrifices which he (who is prompted) gets. Other people do what the pre-eminent people do. The people follow the authority accepted by them. Therefore, you deserve to teach (i.e. please teach) me that wonderful way of life. The advice of a teacher proper for the place and occasion is difficult to get. There are no other objects such as gaining a kingdom, which cool us (i.e. me) down as a meeting with you.

Sūta said:

12. Then the best sage Nārada, with his teeth shining due to a gentle, soft smile said to Ambarīṣa.

Nārada said:

13-19. O king, listen. I shall narrate, for the good of the world and of you, the rites (performed) in the month of Vaiśākha, which I formerly heard from Brahmā. It is difficult to get birth in Bhārata. (More difficult) than that is to be (born as) a human being. Proceeding according to one's own way of life is (more difficult) than being born as a human being. O king, more difficult than that is devotion to Vāsudeva. There also, the month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu, is difficult. Those

men, who, having come across that month, perform (acts like) bathing, (giving) gifts and muttering prayers according to rules, are blessed and fortunate. Merely by seeing them, sinners, desiring religious merit and purified by devotion to the lord, become free from sins. Those who, with voluntary religious observances, have bathed (according to rules) in the month of Māgha, sport for a crore of years in the Nandana grove. As in the world there is no lake like the ocean, in the same way there is no other month like Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu.

20-29. Sins remain in the bodies of men till the Vaiśākha month, destroying impurity, does not come. The remaining five days of that month, beginning with the eleventh day are equal to the entire month. Those who have, with various articles, worshipped god Viṣṇu, the killer of (the demon) Madhu, have obtained the fruit of their existence. What more and more difficult (gain) is not obtained by means of bathing and properly worshipping the highest lord in the month of Vaiśākha? O king, the existence of those who have not given (gifts), who have not offered oblations into fire, who have not muttered prayers, who have not met with death at a sacred place, who have not at all reflected upon Nārāyaṇa, the destroyer of all sins, is fruitless. The wealth of that man who is a miser, when there is wealth with him and he dies without giving (gifts), is useless. Birth in a good family is obtained by bathing at a holy place etc. and penance. (But) O king, nothing (of these) serves (a man) without (i.e. unless he gives) gifts. Due to the importance of a (regular) bath during the five days in the month of Vaiśākha birth in a good family is obtained, so also wealth of various kinds (is obtained). So also, O king, a good son, a good family, wealth, grains, excellent women, good birth, (painless) death, nice enjoyments and pleasures (are secured).

30-34. O king, by the grace of that god—the high-souled Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa, greater love for giving gifts, generosity, excellent courage, and desired accomplishments take place. A man having bathed in the month of Kārtika or Māgha or Vaiśākha and having especially devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu, the killer of (the demon) Madhu, and having given gifts according to his capacity, and having had pleasures of this world, would reach the place of Viṣṇu. As darkness disappears at sunrise,

similarly the series of sins earned (i.e. committed) during many existences would disappear by bathing in the month of Vaiśākha. The self-born one (i.e. Brahmā) himself told me these words. Viṣṇu gave a great currency to the month named Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) and considering secretly Yama's words, made it go to the human world.

35-40. Therefore, O great king, when this month of Vaiśākha has arrived, the devotees of Viṣṇu should bathe in the holy water, purifying men, of Gaṅgā, or of Revā, or Yamunā or Sāradā. O best king, having got up before sunrise, and having worshipped, according to sacred injunction, Mukunda or Madhusūdana, the lord of gods, and having enjoyed all desired superior pleasures along with sons, grandsons and wealth, and having practised penance, one would obtain heaven which is inexhaustible. O glorious one, having known like this, having bathed, worship according to proper rites Madhusūdana, especially in Vaiśākha. Having worshipped Govinda, Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya, you will obtain happiness, a son, wealth and Viṣṇu's position. O king, having saluted the god of gods, Viṣṇu, destroyer of sins, a man should begin this vow of the full-moon day of Caitra.

41-47. Endowed with curbs and restraints, and having given something according to his capacity, eating food fit to be eaten during these days, sleeping on the (bare) ground, remaining in the vow of celibacy, emaciated due to austerities like bodily mortification, meditating on Nārāyaṇa in his heart, he should, when the full-moon day of Vaiśākha has arrived, offer honey, sesamum seeds etc. He (should also give) food to the chief brāhmaṇas devoutly and a cow along with presents. He should also request the brāhmaṇas for the absence of a defect in the (effect of) the bath. O king, as Lakṣmī is dear to Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, so is the month of Vaiśākha dear to Madhusūdana. A man, having thus bathed (in every Vaiśākha) according to the rites for twelve years, should, according to his capacity, bring it to conclusion to please Madhusūdana. O king, I have told you this importance of the month of Vaiśākha, which I had formerly heard from the mouth of Brahmā.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSEVEN

Subtle Are the Ways of Dharma

Sūta said:

1. Having heard these words of Nārada the king who was amazed, saluted him, and thinking of Viṣṇu said (to him):

Ambarīṣa said:

2. O sage, we are confused. How can a very difficult fruit be obtained by a little exertion—merely by means of a bath?

Nārada said:

3-5a. O king, you have spoken the truth that with little exertion great fruit is obtained. Have faith in it. It is the statement of the Creator. The ways of religious merit are subtle; for they are difficult to understand even for the masters. (Even) the learned are bewildered about the act of Viṣṇu whose power is inconceivable. O king, kṣatriyas like Viśvāmitra attained brāhmaṇahood due to the excellence of religious merit.

5b-15a. Therefore, the ways of religious merit are subtle. O king, even Ajāmila who was known as a female slave's husband, had abandoned his religiously wedded wife and always remained on the path of sin. When he died, he, through affection for his son, called, 'Nārāyaṇa'. Due to that thought and utterane of the name (Nārāyaṇa) he obtained a position very difficult to be had. As fire, though touched unwillingly (i.e. unknowingly) burns (one's limb etc.), in the same way, the name of Govinda, though uttered under a pretext (i.e. non-seriously or casually), burns (the sins). The grandsons of sage Vyāsa cohabited with their brothers' wives. Similarly the sons of Pāṇḍu were themselves sons born of their mothers (Kuntī and Mādrī) by those (deities) other than Pāṇḍu. O king, all the five Pāṇḍavas enjoyed Draupadī. And (still) their fame is auspicious. Therefore, the course of religious merit is subtle. Strange are the deeds (of human beings); strange are the ideas of beings. Strange are the beings; strange are the potencies of acts. Perhaps a good deed which remained hidden, grows with some auspicious act, O king; and in a certain existence it gives a great fruit. Religious merit is subtle, and cannot

be guaged in any manner. O king, no positive evidence for the fruit of this (auspicious deed) is heard (i.e. available). A certain auspicious deed, covered by other sins, comes from somewhere and gives its fruit somewhere.

15b-23. There is no destruction of a good or bad deed in this world. Yet due to many auspicious deeds a terrible sin goes (away). O king, with regard to the statement which you made, that due to great exertion great religious merit is (had), listen from me about the cause thereof. If little or much exertion depends upon smallness or greatness (of an activity), then the cultivators etc. would always be men of great religious merit. The utterance of a hymn is a great exertion for a lion. The five products of a cow would not have been (mentioned) as constituents of a vow. Thus the greatness or smallness of an act that ought to be done would follow from another vow of (i.e. like) entering water or fire. There is no such rule that this is a small or this is a great (exertion). O king, the fruit alone which is mentioned in the sacred texts, would be great. As a small (thing) is destroyed by a great one, in the same way a great (thing) is destroyed by a small one. A heap of grass (i.e hay) is burnt even by a small spark of fire. A thousand formidable sins connected with killing, crores of violations (of the modesty) of the teacher's wife, sins like theft, committed by devotees of Kṛṣṇa through ignorance, come to an end.

24-31. (Even) a small good act, done by Viṣṇu's good and wise devotee, would obtain an inexhaustible fruit, O hero. No doubt should be entertained in this (matter). A man having devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha, would obtain whatever is desired by him. By means of devotion to Viṣṇu, children, wealth, gems, a wife, a mansion, horses, elephants, pleasures, heaven, salvation are not away (from the devotee). Thus, there is no doubt that even by means of (an act done according to) rite told in sacred texts, there would be the destruction of a great sin, and the nourishment (i.e. enhancement) of good deeds. The fruit would increase, O king, due to the excellence of devotion and deeds. Even by means of the various (fruits), the course of religious merit should be understood to be subtle. This month of Vaiśākha is dear to the great-souled Viṣṇu. Even if one is observed (i.e. even if bath etc. is done in only

one Vaiśākha) by people, it gives the entire desired (object). O king, this is my view that a man who is given to bathing (right) from his birth with the holy water of Gaṅgā at the proper time and place, who is void of devotion and yet is a giver, does not become pure. Creatures live at holy places on Gaṅgā etc. and flocks of birds always live in temple(s). (Though) they observe fasts, they, being bereft of devotion, meet with death, and do not get the (highest) position (i.e. salvation).

32-38. We are not able to describe the religious merit of him who devoutly keeping Viṣṇu in his heart, who intent on bathing and thus being pure, worships Viṣṇu in Vaiśākha. He, defective in devotion, having entered fire at the time of his death, after the fire which is sprinkled with ghee and oil, whose flames are turning round, is enkindled, does not go to heaven, nor does he obtain any other (good) fruit. Therefore, O king, have faith in the fruit of (i.e. given by) Mādhava. Even a small auspicious act destroys (the fruit of) hundreds of impious acts. As due to the fear of Viṣṇu's name the hosts of all sins perish, and O king, as they perish by bathing in the morning at a holy place when the Sun is in Aries, similarly they certainly perish by taking a bath at dawn (every day) in Vaiśākha, as serpents perish by the lustre of Garuḍa. He, O king, who bathes in Gaṅgā or Narmadā when the Sun is in Aries, and devoutly recites the hymn removing sins, once, twice or thrice, at dawn, noon and evening, goes, being free from sins, to the highest place (i.e. salvation).

39-40. O Ambarīṣa, for getting great religious merit, take care to observe the rule of taking bath in the morning in the month of Vaiśākha. What is said to be obtained by those living in the city of Ānarta for crores of years, is obtained by a single morning bath in the month of Vaiśākha.

41-48. O king, listen to an old account in this regard, viz. the conversation with his wife of the brāhmaṇa Devaśarman. On the bank of Revā, in the very auspicious holy place Amarakaṇṭaka was born the best brāhmaṇa Devaśarman as the son of Kauśika. He was sonless, had no wealth, and was having (i.e. suffering from) many afflictions. He was always troubled by the great grief of poverty. Day and night he would think about a means of (getting) a son and wealth also. Once his beloved wife, of a good vow, named Sumanā, saw her husband full of anxiety

and with his face hung down. Seeing her husband at that time she, the glorious one, said: "Your mind is agitated by numberless troubles. You are confused with delusions. O you very intelligent one, give up your anxiety. Tell me your grief, be calm, be happy; for there is no other grief like anxiety that dries up the body. He who would give it up, becomes happy. O lord, O brāhmaṇa, tell me the cause of your anxiety."

Nārada said:

49. Having heard the words of his dear wife, the very intelligent Devaśarman, having the chaste wife as his companion, though afflicted, said (these) words:

Devaśarman said:

50-51. O good one, I shall tell you all about the cause of my worry, which you have thought about; having heard it, listening (to me), understand it accurately. O you of a good vow, I do not know for what sin I am wealthless and sonless. This is the cause of my anxiety.

Sumanā said:

52-66. Listen, I shall speak (that) which (instruction) will remove all doubt, and will contain all wisdom. Contentment alone is the great auspicious cause of happiness etc. Lack of contentment is a great sin. So said lord Hari. This greed is the seed of sin and its root is ignorance. Falsehood is its trunk; and the great trunks are there due to its great expanse. Its leaves are lustful passion and crookedness; it is always blossomed with bad thought. Its fragrance is falsehood, and ignorance is its fruit. Its walls are the heretics and thieves. The cruel, the fraudulent, the sinners are the birds that have resorted to the large branches of the tree of ignorance. Its great fruit is ignorance, and unrighteousness is the juice in the fruit. It is nourished by the water of emotion; and vehement desire loves its nourishment. It has delight in unrighteous acts, and becomes sweet due to being moist. With fruits like that the tree of greed is fructified. A man who lives by resorting to its shadow, every day eats its self-ripe fruits; being well-nourished by the juice of the fruits—unrighte-

ousness—a man would be well-fed; he (then) sets about for a fall. Therefore, O (my) lord, one should not, resorting to anxiety, have greed. One should not worry about wealth, sons and a wife. O dear one, he who is not wise, being deluded, day and night thinks in vain along the path (i.e. in the manner) of fools. 'How shall I get good objects? How shall I get sons?' The deluded one thinks like this day and night. While worrying he would find great pleasure (just) for a moment. Again he becomes conscious, and is troubled by great affliction. O Brāhmaṇa, giving up anxiety and delusion, follow him. O you very intelligent one, in the worldly existence (one) has relation with none else. Friends, relations, sons, father, mother, are related to themselves only. So also is wife and others.

Devaśarman said:

67. O good one, tell me in detail, of what kind is the relation due to which all—wealth, sons etc. and kinsmen—happen (to be related).

Sumanā said:

68-80. O (my) husband, five kinds of sons are born. I shall now tell about (i.e. explain) them. They are: one who snatches away what is deposited with him; the other is the one connected through debt; enemy; suitable; and neutral, O dear one. O lord, I shall narrate their characteristics separately. Sons, friends, dear wife, father, mother, kinsmen are born on the earth being related to themselves (only). He who has been robbed (of his wealth) on the earth by snatching away his deposit, that is the owner of the deposit; he would be born as a virtuous, handsome son in the house of him who had snatched the deposit. There is no doubt about this. He had passed (away) after having given (the son) the affliction of snatching away the deposit. The owner of the deposit was (i.e. would be) a virtuous, handsome son, endowed with all (good) characteristics, of him who had snatched away the deposit. Talking agreeably and sweetly, and being eloquent, he would show great affection. Being (born) as his son of great qualities, he would, O glorious one, give very fearful affliction, which he (i.e. the father in the present existence) had given him, after generating matchless love and after having seized his wealth,

by means of snatching away his deposit. Being short-lived he meets with death. Again and again striking him and giving grief to him, he departs. When he (i.e. the father) says: 'O son, O son', and laments, then he laughs: 'Who is whose son?' 'This wicked one snatched away my deposit; due to the snatching away of (my wealth), and due to great, unbearable grief, my life formerly departed. Then (I shall depart) by giving him grief, and seizing his excellent wealth'.

CHAPTER EIGHTYEIGHT

Sumanā on Kinds of Sons

Sumanā said:

1-11. (Now) I shall describe to you the son connected through debt. Someone having taken debt from someone dies. The giver of wealth (lender) being a son, or a brother, or a father, or a beloved, would, always wicked internally, remain in the form of a friend. He, of a rough figure, would not at all notice virtue(s). He always speaks cruel words to his relatives. He eats sweet (articles of food), and always enjoys pleasures. He is always engaged in gambling, and longs for stealing. He steals money from the house, and, when prevented, gets angry. Every day he abuses his father and mother. He is a thief; he frightens (others); he speaks very harsh words. Thus having seized his wealth, he remains happily. In childhood he takes formidable wealth through the ceremony performed at his birth etc. Again on the occasions of marriage etc. (he takes money) many times and in various ways. In this way the wealth is reduced, and he says this much also: 'All this—the house, the field—is mine. There is no doubt about it.' Every day he torments his father and mother with strong sticks, pestles and by ruthlessly plucking their hair. On the death of his father and mother the very cruel one becomes affectionless and harsh. There is no doubt about

it. He never performs the śrāddha-rites and never gives gifts. O king, dear sons become like this.

12-16a. O best brāhmaṇa, I shall describe to you the inimical son. When childhood has come, he always behaves as a son. He, while sporting, would beat his father and mother. Having beaten them and again and again laughed he goes away. Again he comes there and is always angry with his father and mother, and abuses them every day. Thus, due to wealth he always indulges in inimical acts. Then again having beaten his father and mother, the wicked-souled one just goes away due to the power of the former enmity.

16b-21. Now I shall describe how the proper son would become dear. As soon as he is born, he would do what is agreeable, and by means of sportive beatings (he would do what is agreeable) in his childhood. Then, after he attains youth, he would do what would please his mother and father. Through devotion (to them) he would please them, and by means of affection, words, and conversing with them in a pleasing way, he would gratify both of them. Coming to know of the death of the elders, he weeps through affection (for them). Being extremely afflicted he performs all śrāddha-rites and offers them piṇḍas. He gives them support of life. Being resolute, he, having the three debts, would certainly, through affection, emancipate them. O dear one, since he would be a proper (son), he would give (to him from whom he borrows). There is no doubt about this. O very wise one, he becomes a son in this manner.

22-27a. Now before you I shall describe the neutral son, O dear one. He always behaves in a neutral manner. He does not at all give. He does not receive. He does not get angry, or is not pleased. O best brāhmaṇa, the neutral one does not go away after abandoning (his parents). Servants, beasts, so also horses, elephants, buffaloes—all these are connected (with a man) through debt. One of us, or both of us have not taken anything fraudulently, nor have we made any deposit with anyone in our former existence; I am not pleasing anyone. O dear one, listen for a moment. (Right) from our childhood I have not had enmity with anyone in the former existence; and O best brāhmaṇa, I have not abandoned my husband. Realising this, be calm; give up (this) useless anxiety. O lord, you never snatched (anything)

from anybody; nor have you given (anything) to anyone. How will (then) wealth come to you? Do not be surprised, for whatever is obtained by one who guards (i.e. tries to guard) it, does not remain (with him).

27b-32. Realising thus, be calm; give up (this) useless anxiety. To whom do the sons, dear wife, kinsmen and relatives belong? In this mundane existence nobody belongs to anyone (else). There is no connection (between two persons), O best brāhmaṇa. Men of wicked feelings, deluded by infatuation and illusion (say:) "This is my house; this is my son; this is my wife." O dear one, the bond of the worldly existence appears to be untrue.

CHAPTER EIGHTYNINE

Devaśarman's Life in the Previous Birth

Nārada said:

1-3. Thus addressed (by his wife) the best brāhmaṇa, Devaśarman, again spoke to his wife, having (his) welfare in mind, and talking wisely: "O good one, you have told the truth which destroys (i.e. removes) all doubts, for it has been said that good men, the truly wise ones, desire (the continuity of) their family. O dear one, I am not so much anxious about (getting) wealth as about (having) a son. With whatever means I shall produce (i.e. have) a son."

Sumanā said:

4-11. A man wins the worlds through a son. A son emancipates (his) family. O glorious one, due to a good son, the father and mother survive. O dear one, it is better to have one son (only). What is the use of (having) many worthless sons? One son emancipates the family; the others (i.e. many sons) cause torment. Formerly only I have said that (these) others (simply) enjoy relation. Due to religious merit a good son is

had; due to religious merit (birth in a noble) family is obtained. A good womb (i.e. being conceived by a noble woman) is obtained through religious merit, and a bad death is had as a result of sins. A heap of pleasures (is had due to religious merit), O dear one. I am telling the truth only. A man lives by celibacy, truth, penance, necessary means of living, gifts, restraints, forgiveness, purity, O dear one; so also by harmlessness, might and non-stealing also. By means of these ten constituents he produces Dharma only. By means of these constituents Dharma becomes complete as the foetus (becomes complete) by means of limbs in the womb. A righteous person produces Dharma with three kinds of acts (viz. of body, of mind and of speech). Dharma being pleased with him, gives him meritorious pleasures. The wise one obtains whatever he thinks of.

Devaśarman said:

12-14. O respectable lady, you have told me the entire excellent knowledge called Dharma. O glorious one, O you of a good vow, if you know, tell me how I would obtain a son devoted to Viṣṇu and possessing virtues. O sinless one, you have obtained (i.e. learnt) the whole way of Dharma from your father. O dear one, I know that due to the favour of Cyavana, with whom Viṣṇu was formerly pleased, you are one who expounds the Vedas.

Sumanā said:

15-20. O you who know religious merit, go to Vasiṣṭha. Request that great sage. From him you will obtain the son knowing religious merit, to whom religious merit is dear.

When these words were uttered by her, the best brāhmaṇa Devaśarman (said:) "O auspicious one, I shall follow your advice. There is no doubt about it." Saying so, that best brāhmaṇa Devaśarman went to Vasiṣṭha who knew everything, who was bright, who was the best among those who practised penance, who, the best brāhmaṇa, remained on a seat on the bank of Gaṅgā, who was surrounded by flames of lustre, who was, as it were, another sun, who, the glorious one, was shining, who was the lion among brāhmaṇas and the best brāhmaṇa. He

repeatedly and devoutly saluted, (prostrating himself) like a staff, that sage. That very lustrous son of Brahmā (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) said to the sinless one: "O you very intelligent one, be comfortably seated on the auspicious seat."

Nārada said:

21-23. The best among the meditating saints who was seated, said to (Devaśarman) the treasure of penance: "O dear man, O glorious one, in your house, your wife and servants are well, so also everything is well with fires, with which sacred rites are performed. You are healthy in all limbs; and you always practise righteous things." Saying so, the very wise (Vasiṣṭha) again said to the brāhmaṇa: "O best brāhmaṇa, what cherished desire of yours (should) I fulfil?"

Nārada said:

24-28. Having spoken these good words to the brāhmaṇa, he ceased speaking. Then that glorious brāhmaṇa said to Vasiṣṭha, the best among sages, the magnanimous one, and the best among those who practised penance: "O revered best brāhmaṇa, (please) listen to my words; you may interrupt (me). Due to which condition (I am suffering from) poverty? How (is it that I am) not having the happiness of (having) a son? O dear one, this is my doubt. Tell me due to which sin (I am poor and sonless). Perplexed by great delusion I was advised by my dear wife, O brāhmaṇa. O dear one, sent by her, I have come to you. Tell me all that which will remove all doubt. (Please) be my emancipator from the bondage of the worldly existence."

Vasiṣṭha said:

29-30. For a man there are five kinds of connections: Sons, friends, so also a brother and other kinsmen and relatives. These respective ones have been already explained to you by Sumanā. O best brāhmaṇa, those (sons) that are related (to the father) through debt, are bad sons.

31-36a. I shall explain to you the auspicious characteristic(s) of a son. He is attached to religious merit; his mind is always

engaged in the practice of truth: he is pure; he is endowed with knowledge; he practised penance; he is the best among the eloquent; he is well-adorned with all rites; he is intent upon Vedic studies; he well knows all sacred texts; he honours gods and brāhmaṇas; he performs all (kinds of) sacrifices; he is a giver and a donor; is sweet-speaking; he is always engaged in the meditation upon Viṣṇu; he is calm; controlled; he is always friendly; he is always devoted to his father and mother; he is learned; he maintains his family. A good son having these qualities gives happiness (to his parents). Others having relation (with a man) cause grief and torment.

36b-38. O sinless one, what have you to do with a neutral son (giving) no fruit? All of them come in the form of sons to the worldly existence, and all of them go after giving terrible grief, O best brāhmaṇa. I shall explain all the wonderful deeds you did and preserved in the former existence.

39-53a. Listen, O you very wise one, you were in your former existence a śūdra, and none else; you were a cultivator of land, you did not have knowledge; you were extremely greedy. You had one wife; you always hated (others); you had many sons; you never gave (gifts); you never knew righteousness and perfect truth. You never gave gifts; you never studied sacred texts; you never visited a holy place; you never undertook a pilgrimage, O you very intelligent one. O brāhmaṇa, you thus repeatedly practised cultivation (of land), and O you best brāhmaṇa, you also formerly reared beasts, so also again and again you reared she-buffaloes and mares. O best brāhmaṇa, you yourself did such deeds formerly (i.e. in your former existence). Similarly, you greedily amassed much wealth. But you never spent it in a righteous way, even after seeing a worthy but feeble recipient; having cultivated land you did not give wealth (to others). O brāhmaṇa, having sold all cowdung and your cattle, you amassed large wealth. You always sold butter-milk, so also ghee and milk and curd. Infatuated by the illusion caused by Viṣṇu, O brāhmaṇa, you thought of bad times and made this money (through making things) very costly. Indeed, you, the pitiless one never gave gifts at that time. O brāhmaṇa, you never worshipped the deities. On the parvan days (in a month) you never gave wealth to brāhmaṇas. On the arrival of

the time for offering a śrāddha, you never performed one devoutly. When the forenoon of the day came, your virtuous wife said to you: "O very intelligent one, it is the time to offer śrāddha to (my) father-in-law, so also the mother-in-law." Hearing these words of them (i.e. your wife and others), you left the house and ran (away). You never realised the path of righteousness, nor did you ever listen to it. Greed was your mother, father, brother. Greed was your relatives and kinsmen. Giving up righteousness, you always preserved greed only.

53b-65a. Therefore, you became unhappy, and were very much tormented by poverty. Day by day great avarice was produced in your mind. Whenever wealth always increased in your house, you were burnt by avarice of the nature of fire. (When) at night you slept, you thought more of greed. When you reached (i.e. when it was) the day, you were always filled with great delusions. (You thought:) When (would this money) be a thousand, a lakh, a crore, a hundred millions, a thousand millions, a million millions in my house? Thus, a thousand, a lakh, a crore, a hundred millions, a thousand millions, a million millions (worth of wealth) was (amassed); but (your) avarice never left (you). Thus, disregarding the time, it always increased. You never gave (gifts); you never offered oblations into fire; you never enjoyed (your wealth), O brāhmaṇa. Definitely you put (i.e. buried) it into the ground. (Your) sons did not know (it). O brāhmaṇa, you always adopted other means for the acquisition of wealth. Being intelligent you always asked people. Deluded by avarice, and asking other(s) about a spade, collyrium, having discussions, and asking (others) about alchemy, you wandered alone. You always thought about formulae that would give you success. You consulted the desire-yielding gem and (others) about entering into various castes. You were burnt by the fire of avarice, you did not move happily. You were blazing with the fire of avarice, you waited, and had lost your intelligence. O best brāhmaṇa, you who were (reduced to a condition) like this, were under the influence of destiny. When your wife and sons asked about that wealth, you never told them, nor did you give it to them, and having died you went to Yama.

65b-69. I have thus told you your whole former account.

Due to these deeds, you are not having wealth, you are poor, O brāhmaṇa. Viṣṇu is pleased with him, in whose worldly existence his sons are always devoted, are of good character, endowed with knowledge, always engaged in truthfulness and righteousness. He with whom Viṣṇu is pleased, enjoys wealth, grains, a wife, sons, grandsons endlessly. Without Viṣṇu's favour a (good) wife and (good) sons are not (obtained), O brāhmaṇa, to have a good birth in a family (i.e. to be born in a good family) is (indeed) the highest position of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER NINETY

An Account of Devaśarman's Good Deeds of Previous Birth

Devaśarman said:

1-4. You have described to me these deeds done (by me) in my former existence; for, O brāhmaṇa, I earned wealth as a śūdra only. (But) O best brāhmaṇa, how is it that I attained brāhmaṇahood? Tell me the reason for all this, O you who are proficient in sacred and profane knowledge. Birth in the Bhārata country is difficult. More difficult is to get manhood (i.e. to be born as a human being). In manhood to be born as a brāhmaṇa is difficult; and extremely difficult is to be born in a good family. There also, due to what did I get a chaste wife, knowing everything, speaking agreeably, endowed with all virtues and difficult to obtain?

Vasiṣṭha said:

5-16. O brāhmaṇa, I shall now describe the righteous deeds that you did in (your) former (existence). If you think (like listening), listen. There was a brāhmaṇa who was highly religious-minded, who was of a good conduct, who was very wise, who was a devotee of Viṣṇu, who was religious-minded, who was always solely devoted to Viṣṇu. He always roamed over the earth for bathing at the holy places. While wandering the very intelligent one came to your house. Merely on seeing

good thought was produced (in your mind), since, when the arrival of the good takes place into one's house, what is not obtained by one, O brāhmaṇa? Whatever is difficult to be obtained in the world, even the stable place of salvation (is obtained) by service to Viṣṇu. O best one, he (i.e. that brāhmaṇa) asked for a place to stay in. Your wife and you, along with your sons, gave it to him. "O brāhmaṇa, come, come comfortably to my house." Thus you repeatedly said to that holy brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu. "Stay here comfortably; this is your house, O you of a good vow. Today I am blessed; I am meritorious; I have gone to a holy place. O brāhmaṇa, on seeing you today I have obtained the fruit of (visiting) a sacred place. You have shown me the great meritorious place where cows live." You shampooed his body, properly rubbed his feet, and washed them with water; and you bathed with the water (flowing from) his feet. You instantly gave ghee, curd, milk and many other substances to that brāhmaṇa, as you were urged by destiny. O glorious brāhmaṇa, with your wife and sons you thus pleased that brāhmaṇa, the devotee of Viṣṇu, and proficient in sacred knowledge.

17-26a. Then, in the bright morning, in the month of Vaiśākha, he who, being pleased, was going to Gaṅgā, taught you through kindness, the greatness of the bath in Vaiśākha; and he made you, with your wife and sons, bathe properly. "As in the world there is no lake like the ocean, similarly there is no (other) month like Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu. Till the month of Vaiśākha, destroying sins, does not arrive, sins remain without any obstacle in the body". O brāhmaṇa, having heard his words, you resorted (to bathing daily) in Vaiśākha, and with a pleased mind you worshipped Viṣṇu. Beginning with the eleventh day you took a morning-bath (every day) with proper rites, for the remaining five days of the month. Due to your devotion to the brāhmaṇa, you every day took bath in Revā (river) during the month of Vaiśākha. You worshipped the highest lord, the god of gods and the killer of (the demon) Madhu. You did not get (a chance) to bathe for a full month from the beginning. Thus, you could bathe (only) for five days. Due to that religious merit and especially due to the company

of that brāhmaṇa, and due to the favour of Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu) you obtained brāhmaṇahood.

26b-27a. Due to your contact with that month, you got (birth in) this great family which is endowed with truth and righteousness difficult to be obtained (even) by brāhmaṇas.

27b-33a. You also obtained a very chaste wife born in the house (i.e. family) of Cyavana and a teacher of the Vedas. O great sage, beauty alone is a great ornament of women. The second (ornament) is good character. The third is truthfulness. Always being noble is the fourth (ornament). The fifth (ornament) is excellent religious merit. Sweetness is the sixth (ornament). The seventh (ornament)—a full ornament—is their constant great purity within and without. Devotion to the husband is the eighth (ornament). Service (to him) is the ninth (ornament). Patience is the tenth (ornament). Affection is the eleventh (ornament) of women, O best brāhmaṇa. Your chaste wife, expounder of the Vedas, is adorned with these (ornaments). You have respectfully got her due to your bathing in the month of Vaiśākha.

33b-41. Which difficult things are not obtained by bathing in the month of Vaiśākha and by duly worshipping the lord? You were deluded by attachment. Your mind was occupied by avarice. O brāhmaṇa, in the former existence you amassed wealth only. You never gave it to brāhmaṇas or to other poor people or to your relatives or sons or wife. While dying you thought of greed only. You did not give (gifts); you did not offer oblations into fire; you did not mutter (prayers); you did not die at a holy place. You did not meditate upon god Nārāyaṇa who destroys all sins. When there is wealth with a man, he becomes a miser. What is more painful than that he dies without giving (gifts). By bathing at a sacred place etc., by penance a birth in a (good) family is obtained. O brāhmaṇa, nothing except (the merit due to) the gifts stands by a man. Due to that sinful thought you were reduced to poverty. You were sonless and were always tormented by affliction. Due to the peculiar virtue of bathing in Vaiśākha even for five days and to worship of Viṣṇu at that time, and due to the company of that brāhmaṇa, O brāhmaṇa, you obtained birth in a (good) family.

42-47a. Even brāhmaṇahood is difficult (to have). A good

son, a (good) family, brāhmaṇahood, wealth, grains, excellent women, good birth and death, good enjoyments, so also happiness, always to have a strong desire to give (gifts), generosity, excellent courage—(thus) O brāhmaṇa, all desired accomplishments are had by the favour of that high-souled god, Viṣṇu. Having bathed (daily) in the month of Kārtika, or in the month of Phālguna, or in the month of Vaiśākha, and having worshipped Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), having devoutly given presents, having enjoyed worldly pleasures, a man then goes to Viṣṇu. By taking a bath (every day) in the month of Vaiśākha, the row of sins committed in many existences disappears, as, O brāhmaṇa, darkness disappears at sunrise.

47b-54. The self-born one (i.e. Brahmā) told me these words. Viṣṇu conceived a pure idea; (so) he first brought about the rite (in) the month of Vaiśākha, to make people go to heaven, after having mentally thought (i.e. known) Yama's secret. Therefore, in this month of Vaiśākha, that has now come, having bathed in a sacred place having holy water (every morning) before the sun has risen, and having, with proper rites, worshipped Madhusūdana, and having enjoyed (i.e. having had) sons, grandsons, wealth, good fortune and desired pleasures, you will, in the end, obtain heaven. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you all that (i.e. all those deeds which) you did in the former existence. O glorious one, having known like this, especially (the importance) of Vaiśākha, bathe (daily) and with proper rites worship Viṣṇu, Govinda, Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya, the god that should be worshipped. (Thereby) you will obtain happiness, a son, wealth and immutable Viṣṇu.

Nārada said:

55-57. The best brāhmaṇa, of great prowess, instructed by Brahmā's son (i.e. Vasiṣṭha), was glad, and the magnanimous one, having saluted Vasiṣṭha there, and having taken his leave of the brāhmaṇa, went home; and the great sage spoke to his wife, Sumanā: "Due to your favour that brāhmaṇa (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) told me all the account of my former deeds. O good one, Vasiṣṭha brought to light all of them. Today only my delusion is destroyed. I shall devoutly worship Viṣṇu, after (daily) bathing in the month of Vaiśākha."

Nārada said:

58. Having heard these very pure, very auspicious words leading to an auspicious result, she, who was delighted, said to her dear husband: "You are blessed, since you have been advised by the brāhmaṇa (i.e. Vasiṣṭha)."

CHAPTER NINETYONE

Happy End of Devaśarman's Story

Nārada said:

1-6. That very wise Devaśarman along with that Sumanā took a bath according to proper rites at the very famous and holy sacred place called Kanakhala in (i.e. on the bank of) Gaṅgā in Vaiśākha when the Sun was in Aries. Observing curbs and restraints, he worshipped Viṣṇu according to the proper rites, and gave something (by way of gifts) according to his capacity. He ate food fit to be eaten during days of fast, slept on the bare ground, and practised the vow of celibacy. He became emaciated by the practice of penance like Kṛcchra (i.e. mortification of the body) and meditated upon Nārāyaṇa in his heart. When the full-moon day arrived, he gave honey, sesamum seeds etc., so also he devoutly gave food, a cow along with other presents, to brāhmaṇas, and requested the brāhmaṇas for the absence of a defect in (the fruit of) bathing there. That beautiful, chaste wife, solely devoted to her husband, every day served her husband, after bathing and worshipping Viṣṇu.

7-14. The couple, undoubtedly looking upon themselves as fortunate, went home, well-pleased. Due to the efficacy of that religious merit, he had, after some time, unlimited wealth, grains, and (other) riches. He obtained four sons who were endowed with modesty, were proficient in sacred texts, knew the ways of the world, were devoted to Viṣṇu, were solely devoted to their mother and father, whose intellect was unbounded, and who were instructed for (having the fourfold) goal of human

life, were well-known, knew the Vedas and were devoted to Brahman, who were endowed with all virtues, and were famous. The couple, having enjoyed the full rich pleasure from the sons, took, after a long time, a great (i.e. auspicious) bath in Vaiśākha, due to devotion to him (i.e. Viṣṇu) and the favourableness of their religious merit, O king. As Viṣṇu is actually said to be the lord of Vidyā (i.e. knowledge) and of Lakṣmī (i.e. prosperity), in the same way the month of Vaiśākha is dear to Viṣṇu. O sinless one, I have told you in a slightly abridged form this importance of (the month of) Vaiśākha, which, O hero, I had formerly heard from (my) father (i.e. Brahmā).

CHAPTER NINETYTWO

Citrā's Story

Sūta said:

1. Hearing these words of that Nārada, that king, being amazed, saluted him, and thinking of Viṣṇu in his mind, said (to him):

Ambarīṣa said:

2-6. How should we err about it, since by means of little exertion a śūdra behaving sinfully obtained excellent brāhmaṇahood? O dear one, to obtain brāhmaṇahood, even by means of various acts of religious merit, is difficult. (Then) how is it that the mean one obtained it (merely) by bathing (daily) during the month of Vaiśākha? O lord, even rich kings like me do not obtain the lordship of the earth by (performing) sacrifices, (giving) gifts, (practising) severe austerities, and other acts called (acts of) religious merit. That (Viśvāmitra, the) son of Gādhi obtained it after a long time and with great difficulty by practising continuously for full hundred years various kinds of severe austerities and with many efforts. How is it (then) that that sinful one belonging to the lowest caste, bereft of his own duties, poor

and non-giver obtained through this small religious merit done without exertion the essential nature of Rāma?

Nārada said:

7-12a. O king, you have told the truth. Brāhmaṇahood is very difficult to get. The ways of Dharma are subtle and difficult to understand. Strange are the deeds; strange is the thought of a being; strange are the beings; and strange are the powers of deeds. O king, at some time a good deed, done in secret, thrives due to some auspicious act. It gives great fruit even in the same existence. This is mysterious and subtle Dharma. It cannot be carried in any manner. No certainty about the time when it would give fruit is known. Whatever good deed concealed by other sins, comes from somewhere and at some place and gives a good fruit.

12b-18. In this world (the fruit of) a good or bad deed does not perish. Yet due to many auspicious acts (even) a formidable sin perishes. O king, you said that the fruit of a deed would be obtained there due to greater exertion; in that matter listen to what I say. If smallness and greatness of a deed depended on little exertion and much exertion (respectively), then there are men observing great vows and constantly doing deeds. There is great exertion to obtain the urine of a lion, a tiger etc. Therefore, in a rite the products of a cow are recommended. Thus if repetition of a deed would mean its greatness, then entering water, fire etc. would be smaller than (any) other vow. There is no rule which says this is small or that is great. The fruit of it that is laid down in sacred texts is alone its great produce, as a great thing destroys a small one or a small thing destroys a great one. The destruction of grass (i.e. hay) is seen (to take place) even due to a small spark.

19-24. O king, Ajāmila was known to be the husband of a maid servant. He had forsaken his religiously wedded wife; he constantly remained in (i.e. committed) sins. At the time of his death he called his son by his name Nārāyaṇa. And due to uttering the name (of Viṣṇu) he obtained a very difficult position (i.e. salvation). As fire though touched unwillingly (i.e. unknowingly) burns, in the same way, the name of Viṣṇu, even though it is uttered under some pretext, burns (sins). (Sins due to) myriads of killings, thousands of swearings, all thefts, crores of violations

of the teacher's wife are instantly destroyed by (uttering) the name 'Govinda' dear to Viṣṇu. O hero, whatever small good deed full of devotion to Viṣṇu is done by a learned man, would have an inexhaustible fruit. No doubt should be entertained about this.

25-33. A man having devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha, would obtain whatever is desired by him. Due to devotion to Viṣṇu, children, wealth, wife, land, mansion, horses, elephants, pleasures, heaven and salvation are not away (i.e. are easy to obtain). Thus by means of a small act laid down in the sacred texts, if it is done according to the proper rites, even a great sin would perish. There is no doubt about this. O learned one, due to the excellence of the devotion and the act, there would be greater fruit. The ways of Dharma are subtle, and are difficult to be known even by the wise. This month of Vaiśākha is dear to glorious Viṣṇu. Even all alone it gives all the desired objects in the three worlds. In my view a wise one who gives gifts without sincerity even from his birth, and one who somehow bathes with the holy water of Gaṅgā at the proper place and time, is not purified. A man of wicked thoughts, though at the time of death enters fire, blazing by the sprinkling of ghee and oil with its flames turning all round, and is burnt, yet he does not obtain heaven or any other (similar) fruit. Gods live at the holy places on (the bank of) Gaṅgā etc., so also hosts of yakṣas live in temples. They, being bereft of devotion, observe fast and perish, (but) do not get the (desired) fruit. Therefore, we are not able to describe the religious merit of him who intent upon bathing (daily) and purified, would, having kept devotion in the lotus of his heart, devoutly worship Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha. O king, in this context also listen to an old account.

34-44a. I shall tell you about a certain queer fruit due to the favour of the month of Vaiśākha and of Viṣṇu, viz. that a certain brāhmṇa woman obtained. Formerly there was the lord of Kānti well-known as Divodāsa. His daughter, a great gem, always best among females endowed with virtues and beauty, of a good character and charming and auspicious, and matchless in beauty on the earth, was known as Divyādevī. Her father saw her endowed with form and beauty. Seeing his daughter Divyādevī, the king became anxious as to which good, glorious bride-

groom this daughter should be given. (Thus) thinking and properly knowing the king of Rūpadeśa the king called the magnanimous Citrasena and gave his daughter to that intelligent Citrasena. O king, when the time of his marriage came, that Citrasena died due to the perversity of destiny. The religious-minded king Divodāsa thought and, O king, having called brāhmaṇas, he asked them: "At the time of her marriage Citrasena died. (Please) tell me what kind of fate she will have."

A brāhmaṇa said:

44b-58. O king, the marriage of a daughter is performed according to sacred injunctions. Another husband is enjoined by the scriptures in the case of a woman, when her husband dies, or when he forsakes her, or when afraid of a great disease he abandons her and goes away, or, O king, if he would renounce the world. Mainly it is the father who would get (his daughter) married. There is no doubt about this. This is, O king, what is ordained by the good people in law books.

The best brāhmaṇas said: "Get her married." The religious-minded Divodāsa was urged by the brāhmaṇas. The king made up his mind to get her married. O king, again he gave Divyādevī away in marriage to the meritorious, magnanimous king Puṣpasena. That king too died at the time of marriage. Whenever the glorious father (king Divodāsa), extremely afflicted, made an effort at getting her married, at the auspicious moment (of marriage) the husband died. Then twentyone husbands died at different times. Then the king, of a known valour, being firm along with the minister, called him, and the lord of the earth decided upon her self-choice marriage. Then he invited many kings and chiefs devoted to religion for her self-choice marriage. Those foolish kings disturbed by her beauty and pounded by death fought among themselves. Thus, O lord, men, those kṣatriyas perished. Divyādevī, afflicted with grief, then wept piteously. Then king Divodāsa, seeing that girl very much afflicted and weeping, saluted, with his neck (bent) politely, his family-priest knowing law, having sacred knowledge, and practising penance (and said to him).

Divodāsa said:

59. Favour me and tell me what the great sin of my daughter Divyādevī is, that has done this (mis-)deed.

Jātukarṇa said:

60-76. O hero, I shall tell you the deeds of Divyādevī done in her former existence. Listen while I am telling them. There is a holy city called Vārāṇasī that destroys sins. In it there was a very wise man named Suvīra. He was born in the vaiśya caste and was endowed with wealth and grains. His wife, O very wise one, was quite well-known as Citrā. Abandoning the family-practices, she behaved badly. She did not care for her husband, and remained in (doing) fearful deeds. She, of a wicked mind, gave up auspicious acts, and acted sinfully. She, a wanton woman, loving quarrels, always censured her husband. Always given to staying in another man's house, she wandered much. The wicked one would always find the weak point of others among the beings. She was engaged in condemning the good; she always laughed very much. She was addicted to bad company; due to her speech she was dear to people of bad conduct. She was cunning; she hated religious people; she was a liar. Knowing her to be like this, Suvīra married another (woman). That pious Vīra (i.e. Suvīra) always given to truly holy thoughts constantly enjoyed, according to pious ways, objects of senses dear to his heart and happily along with that new wife. He was honoured by that unlimitedly truthful chaste lady of a good mind. That strange Citrā, of an excellent complexion, a wanton woman, hating piety in company of (i.e. with) virtues, was driven out by him. Moving freely and being shameless she moved with her paramour. She joined those who were engaged in (committing) sins; she was attached to the job of a messenger. She was skilled in the art of a go-between of other women. She broke families and had a crooked heart. Having called a chaste woman she would urge her by words generating conviction in stories about the desire for diversion and sports. The sinful one would stir the minds of good men and women. She would cause good women to be offered to other men (than their own husbands). Thus she caused fraud, bereft of the host of pious (acts), to be done (by others). Having

thus enjoyed for a hundred years. She lived like a prostitute. Always given to sinful acts she died in course of time. She was born as your daughter Divyādevī in your house. She was (born) as a beautiful girl endowed with a (good) form, as she was urged by her destiny in the former (existences).

Nārada said:

77. Hearing these words of him (i.e. Jātukarṇa), Divodāsa was extremely amazed. The king spoke sweet words to the sage Jātukarṇa.

Divodāsa said:

78-79. When she who was of such a bad behaviour and engaged in bad acts, died, how is it that she was born as a worthy daughter of mine, whose deity is Lakṣmī's hushand (i.e. Viṣṇu) and who am born in a very noble family? And, O sage, due to which strange religious act, she doing (such) acts has obtained a lucky birth, difficult to get, in a large, royal, rich family?

Nārada said:

80. Having heard these words of enquiry of that king, the wise sage then spoke a few true and pleasant words.

Jātukarṇa spoke:

81-86. Citrā, deceiving covert, lustful paramours, bereft of wealth and intelligence, by means of strange sexual unions, and drinking poisonous drinks, went from here and became a prostitute in the very famous city (called) 'Nāga'. A certain brāhmaṇa, afflicted and troubled, (but) of a pure heart, one evening came to that city named Nāga. Not seeing any other place (for camping), the ignorant one went to the house of Citrā. (Merely) by looking at him, the prostitute very much deluded him. He was pleased by her with shampooing his feet, bathing him, offering him a tāmbūla, a seat and food, and diversions. Then he was free from dejection. Then with strange sexual unions, she, absolutely without having any purpose in view, served him well. The brāhmaṇa who was attached (to her) due to her peculiar devotion, passed the entire night with her. When, in the morning,

he was about to leave, he whose mind was somehow attached to Citrā and who was pleased by her being solely devoted (to him), with her acts and deeds (said):

The brāhmaṇa said:

87-98. O dear one, I who am pleased (by you) must do a good turn in return. I shall without any discrimination tell you my strong affliction. Listen with respect to that auspicious (act) which destroys all sins, a description of (i.e. told by) the brāhmaṇas, formerly telling a tale on the bank of Narmadā. He who in the month of Vaiśākha, when the Sun enters Aries, carefully bathes even for three days just before sunrise, is freed from heaps of sins. He who for the entire month of Vaiśākha would bathe outside (his house), and would worship Viṣṇu with due rites, also destroys his sins. A man is freed from great sins especially by such acts as bathing at a holy place and giving gifts (there) during the month of Vaiśākha. The heap of great sins freely remains in the body of a man till he gladly, at dawn, before sunrise, bathes (at a holy place), when the Sun has entered the Zodiacal sign Aries. Thus I heard from the brāhmaṇas that were talking, about the excellent boat (useful) in crossing the ocean of many sins. Nearby is the excellent river Śivadehā. To destroy that stream of sins I am going to bathe there. O dear one, if you like, or if your mind is detached (from the worldly existence) then come with me for the bath in Vaiśākha. This life, so also this extremely charming youth are transitory. They are the cause of the stay in hell, and it would be difficult for us to avoid it. You pleased me and caused me to fall into the ocean of sins, which is true even of the great who live with the wicked. What is the use of talking much in this matter? Delay for (even) a moment is not proper. I shall emancipate you also, if you have special attachment to Viṣṇu.

Citrā said:

99-100. O lord, due to luck I am having your company as a result of (my) religious merit. My mind is certainly detached. It has a dislike for the worldly existence. Indeed I have learnt in (i.e. from) the sacred texts about the company of the good. My salutation to him who is inconceivable and uncontrolled.

Jātukarṇa said:

101-109. Speaking like this and urged by the sage that Citrā, after having taken a little wealth that was there with her, then went with him. Then that brāhmaṇa also reached the body (i.e. the stream) of Śivadehā in the month of Vaiśākha, bathed (there), and the kind one gave her the joy of bathing on that day. Then the kind-hearted brāhmaṇa made that Citrā, talking beautifully, bathe according to the proper rite. When the brāhmaṇas were separately reading the Purāṇas, she gladly heard there the greatness of the bath in Vaiśākha, by merely hearing which the darkness of sins gets exhausted, as at the sunrise the stream (i.e. the heap) of darkness perishes. She, due to the bath in that holy water causing cessation of birth, of Śivatanu (i.e. Śivadehā), had her mind pure and she became spotless like the sun's lustre. There in the Revā various people longing for the end of (the visits to) the worlds and engrossed in the service to Viṣṇu plunged in Vaiśākha. The men who clean their impure bodies in (the water of) Narmadā, giving happiness here (only), especially in the month of Vaiśākha, become those who enjoy the sports of the kings of mortals. (Merely) by (one's) remembering Revā she destroys the sin (committed) from birth. When seen, she (destroys the sin) of ten existences. If somehow (someone) bathes in her, she (destroys) the sins of a hundred births. When she is resorted to, she gives (residence in) Rudra's heaven.

110-123. During the entire month of Vaiśākha that Citrā bathed in the water of Narmadā, and every day, according to her capacity, gave something to brāhmaṇas. Due to the company of the brāhmaṇa she devoutly listened to the prayer to Viṣṇu, when the brāhmaṇas there recited it. Having bathed there in the water of Revā for the entire month of Vaiśākha, and having received, according to the proper rite, (a blessing) about absence of defect from the brāhmaṇas, she lived there for a month. That brāhmaṇa named Sudeva also made a new hut there, lived in the hut due to compassion for Citrā and favouring her incessantly bathed in the water of Revā. Then after some time the brāhmaṇa died. After him, O king, Citrā also died. Due to the religious merit of (i.e. collected during) the month of

Vaiśākha she, without seeing (i.e. experiencing) the torments inflicted by Yama, became your daughter at that time only. It is the result of the acts of (i.e. done during) that (month), that she obtained (birth) in a king's family which is devoted to Viṣṇu, which is pure, and which cannot be obtained by sinners, O hero; and O best among men, her excellent name was (fixed as) Divyādevī. She is enjoying the fruit of the food, enjoyments, pleasures and happiness that she formerly gave to the brāhmaṇa, though she was associated with him as a prostitute and of that little that she gave after having bathed in the month of Vaiśākha. She is drinking cold water and incessantly eating sweet food; and, enjoying divine enjoyments, lives in the house of the lord (i.e. you); and, being tormented by pain, grief etc. enjoys whatever is given by destiny. A little of the fruit of her act, viz. that she was engaged in breaking the houses (i.e. families of men and women), has (now) come up. O hero, that beautiful woman, though a great sinner, was born as your daughter without going through the torments inflicted by Yama due to the efficacy of the bath in the month of Vaiśākha. O hero, I have thus told you the behaviour of your daughter which was due to bad acts during her entire (former) existence.

CHAPTER NINETYTHREE

Divyādevī Is Married to Vīrasena

Nārada said:

1. Having heard these wonderful words of Jātūkarṇa, the king having respectfully saluted the learned sage, said:

Divodāsa said:

2a. O sage, how would she now be free from this affliction?

Jātūkarṇa said:

2b-4. I shall tell you about a very meritorious (act) by (doing) which she would be happy. Though generally it is not

to be disclosed, I shall tell it to you. Though the act is small, it is wonderful (and) so would destroy (the fruit of) hundreds of bad acts. As due to the power of meditation upon Viṣṇu great and full sin perishes, in the same way a formidable (sin) perishes due to the (daily) morning bath and gifts (given) in the month of Vaiśākha.

5-6. As elephants flee due to the fear of a lion, similarly all heaps (of sins) perish due to morning bath at a holy place when the Sun has entered Aries and due to the eulogy of Viṣṇu. Certainly sins run away due to a (daily) bath at dawn in Vaiśākha, as serpents run away due to Garuḍa's lustre.

7-11a. Therefore, Divyādevī, after having listened to greatness of Vaiśākha, and having listened to the sin-removing eulogy of Viṣṇu, should again be given (in marriage). She will enjoy the happiness of the company of her husband. O king, that Sudeva also is born as the mighty king of the Pāṇḍya country due to the religious merit (obtained by him) by means of bathing in Revā in the month of Vaiśākha. Give him only your daughter purified like that by the (Vaiśākha) bath, and again by (her) listening to Viṣṇu's eulogy (in the month of Vaiśākha). No doubt should be entertained about this. O king, see the wonder. The fruit of a pious act is said to be the same in this world and in the next one.

Nārada said:

11b-15. Just on hearing this the king was delighted, and made his daughter perform the entire rite as told by Jātūkarṇa. He married Divyādevī to that Vīrasena only, the chief of the Pāṇḍya country and her only friend in her former birth. With Vīrasena, her friend due to her deeds in her previous existence, she who well practised vows, enjoyed many objects of senses. O Ambarīṣa, I have in brief told you a little about the greatness of Vaiśākha. What else would you like to hear?

CHAPTER NINETYFOUR

The Means of Destroying Sins

Ambarīṣa said:

1-5. O lord, I desire to hear that hymn which destroys sins (and) by merely hearing which the heap of sins melts away. I am lucky; I am favoured, that I was made to hear the auspicious rite by merely hearing which the (fruit of) bad deeds that is earned is lost; then what is wonderful there if (greater merit is earned) by auspicious ablutions in the month of Vaiśākha sacred to god Viṣṇu? By ablutions which are laid down as compulsory the heap of sins perishes. Even by the recital of his name, there would be (i.e. one would reach) his heaven. O sage, I think that which is called Viṣṇu's name is alone meritorious, great, pure, charming, to be attained in the world by good deeds only, and is present in the month of Vaiśākha. Oh! they are blessed who remember the name of Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha. O (sage), tell me again his account which is pure and which is the friend of all.

Sūta said:

6. Hearing the words of the best king to whom Viṣṇu was dear, the sage was pleased, and though he was eager for having the bath in Vaiśākha, he said so because of his interest in the account of Viṣṇu.

Nārada said:

7-8. O king, it is true that this rite of sweet talk about the account of Viṣṇu between ourselves is pure; and it is superior to the holy bath in the month of Vaiśākha, as (the talk is) with you whose deity is Viṣṇu. On the earth I look upon him as the devotee of Viṣṇu, whose life is for Dharma, whose Dharma is for Viṣṇu, and whose days and nights are (spent in doing) virtuous deeds.

9-10. O king, I shall tell you a little about the fruit due to the bath in Vaiśākha. Even my father would not be able to tell in detail the entire (account of the importance of Vaiśākha), by

merely bathing in which the dead got emancipation. Sinners bathed in the superior water of Narmadā in the month of Vaiśākha.

11-17a. Formerly a brāhmaṇa who was known as Muniśarman, who was religious-minded, who was truthful, who was pure, who possessed tranquillity and restraint, so also forgiveness and contentment, who was engaged in rites in honour of the dead ancestors, who followed the injunctions of the sacred texts and the codes of laws, who was engaged in (speaking) sweet words, who was diligent in worshipping Viṣṇu, who was intent on the company of the devotees of Viṣṇu, who knew (what happens in) the three times, who was engrossed in his own duty, who was wise, tender-hearted, to whom his wife was dear, who was kind, very intelligent, who knew the essential nature of things, who was learned and dear to brāhmaṇas, while wandering for pilgrimage to the holy places went to Revā for bathing in the month of Vaiśākha and saw before him five men who were very much afflicted, who did not touch one another, whose bodies were dark, who were seated after having resorted to the shade of a bunyan tree, who, with their hearts dejected, were looking in all directions.

17b-20. Seeing them the best brāhmaṇa, being amazed, thought: 'Who are these men here in the forest, who are frightened, and whose movements are timid? They appear to be thieves, with their forms changed, and sharing one another's company. These, having dark, lustrous bodies are talking to one another'. While the best and wise brāhmaṇa was thinking like this, all (the men) came there, and remaining away (i.e. at a distance) from him, and respectfully joining the palms of their hands and saluting him, spoke clearly thus:

The five men said:

21-30a. We are looking upon you as the best, bright man, venerable due to your behaviour, chief among the kind, O brāhmaṇa. Listen to our words. You are our friend. The good are the prop of the helpless who have become sinful due to fate. The good remove the suffering of the oppressed merely by their sight. I am a kṣatriya, named Vīravāhana, and a resident of the Pāñcāla country. Through folly I killed a brāhmaṇa with an arrow hit-

ting an invisible mark, the sound of which was only heard. I was bereft of the lock of hair on the crown of my head and of the sacred thread, and was without a mark. I roamed on the earth saying, "I am the killer of a brāhmaṇa. Give alms to me who am a killer of a brāhmaṇa and who am very sinful." Thus wandering at all holy places, I have come here. O best sage, my (sin due to the) killing of a brāhmaṇa does not go away even today. O lord, doing like this I who am being burnt by sin, and whose heart is full of grief, have passed a year. O brāhmaṇa, this other one that is seen here, is a brāhmaṇa (named) Candraśarman. O brāhmaṇa, with his mind full of folly he killed his preceptor. He is said to be the killer of his preceptor due to his mind being full of folly. He lived in the country of Māgadha. He was abandoned by his kinsmen. Since then wandering due to (ill) luck, he has come here, O sage. He is without a lock of hair on the crown of his head and without a sacred thread. He is (also) bereft of the marks of a brāhmaṇa.

30b-32. I asked him his account; and the brāhmaṇa told me the truth that by him, staying in his preceptor's house, with his mind full of anger and being greatly deluded, was killed his preceptor. Burnt by that sin he lives oppressed by grief. O brāhmaṇa, this third one again is the composed Vedaśarman.

33-35a. Due to folly, and as a result of his attachment to a prostitute this brāhmaṇa became a drunkard. I asked him (his account), and he too told me everything that had taken place; (he) oppressed by mental torment told me all his acts. All people, his wife and relatives, drove him away. Smeared with that sin and wandering, he has come here.

35b-37a. The fourth one is a vaiśya, Vidhura by name, who violated the bed (i.e. the wife) of his teacher. Through ignorance he enjoyed his mother who had become a prostitute and who lived in Videha for three months. Then, having come to know the truth, he, being afflicted, moved from there and has come to this land, O sage.

37b-43a. This fifth one is a great sinner, keeping the company of sinners. Every day through greed for money he committed a sin like theft. This vaiśya filled with many sins, was abandoned by his (own) people. With his mind dejected, he, named Nanda, has come to one place. O best brāhmaṇa, none of us

touches one another by means of (having) food (together) or having the same covering, except talking to one another, O glorious best brāhmaṇa. We do not sit on the same seat; do not sleep on the same bed. Thus overpowered by grief, we went to various holy places; (but) O best sage, our formidable sin does not leave us. Seeing you, the bright one, our pleased minds say: 'Due to the auspicious sight of a good man like you, our sins have come to an end.'

43b-45a. O lord, tell us a remedy, by which our sins will perish. O brāhmaṇa, O lord, we know you to be kind and to be one who knows the meaning of the Vedas. You are certainly the emancipator of those that are oppressed and are seeking (refuge), that are repenting, and that have got (i.e. committed) sins through folly.

Nārada said:

45b-46a. Hearing these words of them, the sage Muniśarman, the ocean of compassion, said these words after thinking:

Muniśarman said:

46b-48. You have committed sins through ignorance. You are telling the truth. You are repenting. Therefore, now you deserve to be favoured by me. Listen to my true words. With my hands raised I am speaking. (Listen to) what I formerly heard from Aṅgiras in a conclave of sages. It is found in the Vedas, and is also heard from the mouth of the teacher.

49-57. Firstly you did not propitiate Viṣṇu. You have truly told it. There is no other satisfaction than eating. There is no other teacher than (one's) father. There is no other worthy recipient than brāhmaṇas. There is no god higher than Viṣṇu. There is no holy place like Gaṅgā. There is no gift like that of a cow. There is no prayer like the Gāyatrī. There is no vow like that of the twelfth day. There is no friend like the wife. There is no virtue like compassion. There is no happiness like freedom. There is no excellent stage of a man like that of a householder. There is no better conduct than truthfulness. There is no greater pleasure than contentment. There is no better month than Vaiśākha which destroys sins when resorted to according to (proper) rites and through devotion, and which is dear to Viṣṇu.

It is especially very difficult to be secured at holy places like Gaṅgā (i.e. visiting holy places like Gaṅgā is very difficult in Vaiśākha). All expiations like (sacrifices) lasting for twelve years (are easier). Sins roar till the month of Vaiśākha has not arrived. He, of a pure heart, solely devoted to Viṣṇu, who bathes in the water (of Gaṅgā) that has sprung from Viṣṇu's feet during the entire month of Vaiśākha, alone destroys all his sins. The sinners have met him for the atonement of their sins. What should people say about him?

58-60. That man who now bathes in the water of Narmadā, which gives happiness and removes sins, in this month called Mādhava, when (the Sun) is in Aries, is freed from all sins. In the month of Vaiśākha big rivers are difficult to be found everywhere. Yet more difficult (to get) is Gaṅgā, so also Revā, so also Yamunā. He who, having gone respectfully at least to one of these three, bathes there in the month of Vaiśākha, becomes sinless and would go to Viṣṇu.

61. Therefore, you who have committed sins, should, along with me, go to Revā, and bathe there in the water of Revā, the only essence of religious merit, resorted to by hosts of sages, in the month of Vaiśākha, to remove your entire fear of sins.

62. Thus addressed, all the sinners, being delighted, went with the sage to Revā, praising her (power of) working wonders.

63-66. Muniśarman who was going from there, and who was followed like that by (those) men, saw on his way eight frightened (but) fearful goblins who were making various sounds, who were moving here and there, whose hair was raised and red, whose teeth were black and who were thin-waisted. Seeing them running towards him in the forest filled with thorns and without trees and water, he, with his mind disturbed by fear, said: "Salutation to Nārāyaṇa. (O Nārāyaṇa) protect (me), protect (me)."

67-69. Hearing the words, "Salutation to Nārāyaṇa" which are the great abode of piety, they who had obtained the condition of goblins, mentally went back to their previous existence. Seeing them of a modest mind, Muniśarman speaking sweetly, said: "Who are you, O deformed men? Who has done which deed due which this deformation has been obtained (i.e. has

taken place)? How is it that all of you are afflicted like this and are fearful?"

The ghosts said :

70-77a. We are always oppressed by hunger and thirst; we are overcome with a heap of griefs. O wise one, we are cruel of heart, we have lost our power of understanding and are confounded. We who are fools and kill human beings, do not know the directions anywhere. We have told (one) grief. This is again the absence of happiness. On hearing your loud (but) delicate utterance 'Nārāyaṇa', it appears as if the morning has dawned due to the sight of sunrise. Having seen you, O brāhmaṇa, we have attained purity of nature. O brāhmaṇa, on seeing you and having heard Viṣṇu's name, we have reached another existence, we have become kind. Generally the sight of a devotee of Viṣṇu removes disgrace, purifies the minds of men, and gives them courage. I am Paryuṣita by name. This sacred one is Sūcaka. The next is Śīghraga; then is Rodhaka. This fifth one is Lekhaka. This sixth one is Vāgduṣṭa; this seventh is Vidaivata. This eighth one, giving trouble, is Nityayācaka.

Muniśarman said:

77b-78a. How do you who are goblins, have names which are due to deeds (performed by individuals)? What is that reason for which you have names?

The ghosts said:

78b. I always ate sweet (articles of food) and gave stale (food) to a brāhmaṇa, (and that too) without ghee, though there was ghee (in my house).

79-88a. This impure and overanxious one by nature looked for and reported real or unreal weak points and failings of others. Therefore, he is called Sūcaka. O best brāhmaṇa, this one, when requested by a hungry brāhmaṇa, would quickly disappear. For this reason, O best brāhmaṇa, he is (called) Śīghraga. This sinful and bad-hearted one, sitting upon the top of the house, has always eaten all alone. Therefore, he is known as Rodhaka. This one has always resorted to silence and scratches the earth with (the toes of) his foot. He is the greatest sinner among us. He is

(called) Lekhaka, accompanied by (other) people. This one hates the virtues of the virtuous; (has) appreciation of virtues in one who does not have them; he attributes knowledge to one who does not have it. Therefore, he is called Vāgduṣṭa. This sinful one due to heresy does never care for manes, deities and men and for good deeds. Therefore, he is (called) Vidaivata. This one is always a suppliant; always shows real or unreal poverty; tortures beings; and is greedy. Therefore, he is (called) Yācanaka. These goblins—i.e. we—having formerly experienced torments inflicted in hells, have again become well-settled on seeing (you.) I have told you all this account about ourselves. If you believe, then ask a question. I shall tell you (something) else.

The brāhmaṇa said:

88b. All the beings that are there on the earth, are all dependent upon the food (they eat). I desire to hear about your actual food.

The ghosts said:

89-97. Listen to the food of (i.e. taken by) us, which is condemned by all beings, and on hearing about which you will always repeatedly censure us. (We subsist on) phlegm, urine, excrement, and the dirt from the bodies of women. We enjoy at those houses where purity is abandoned, and enjoy there things like burnt utensils etc. thrown out by women, and which are censurable due to dirt. The goblins enjoy in those houses where they do not worship Viṣṇu, which are controlled by women, which are without kindness and forgiveness. Goblins enjoy at that house where indecent language is used, where the women are impure, and where struggle is constantly going on. We enjoy there where the daughters (and sisters) are not honoured, so also excellent women (are not honoured), and where contact with bad people is frequent. The goblins enjoy there where no service is (offered) to Viṣṇu; where no story about Viṣṇu is (told); where there is no love for Viṣṇu. Those also in whose house goblins, being delighted enjoy, become goblins, and due to that sin become the destroyers of their own family. (Thus) O brāhmaṇa, I who am talking, get my food.

98-99a. Nothing more sinful than this can be told. Being dejected due to the condition of a ghost (i.e. due to my being turned into a ghost), I am asking you of a firm vow so that I should not continue to be a ghost, and I would be free from this existence as a ghost.

The brāhmaṇa said:

99b-105a. By means of auspicious vows like Ekādaśī etc., by means of narrations of (the tales about) Viṣṇu, by means of worshipping deities and guests, so also by means of worshipping the teacher (or the elders) etc., by means of practices followed by good people, (by observing vows on auspicious) days as told in the sacred texts and codes of laws, so also by means of performing śrāddha rites and giving gifts: as performed according to the wise by practices like these there would be no ghosts in the family. He who being polite to his kinsmen, repeatedly salutes a cow, a brāhmaṇa, a holy place, the top of the Amara mountain, a river, a big river, and the aśvattha tree, does not become a ghost in the world. That man also who, being controlled, worships (these) in this order at the holy places on (the bank of) Gaṅgā etc., has inexhaustible religious merit. Even a powerful person like me would not be able to describe it even in thousands of years. He would be free from his existence as a goblin merely on seeing (these).

105b-109. The month of Kārtika is great and is dear to Viṣṇu. The best month for austerities is Phālguna, dear to Viṣṇu. The month of Vaiśākha is Viṣṇu's month, and has Viṣṇu as its deity. The deities knew it to be the best of all months, in which all rites are accomplished. The esteemed knowledge of Brahman comes (then). (Thus Brahmavidyā) is Lakṣmī, the cause of everything, since she stays there in this month. Therefore, this month is known as Mādhava. As it is certain that among gods there is no god like Viṣṇu, similarly among all months there is no month like (Vaiśākha) dear to Viṣṇu.

110-118. Even by devoutly listening to the greatness of that month of Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) one becomes free from the existence as a goblin; then what (would happen) by performing rites (in this month)! A man who is solely devoted (to Viṣṇu) is freed from all sins merely by means of conversing with the good

resorting to a holy place, reciting (the name) Nārāyaṇa, or even by means of hearing that name. O goblins, I shall try for your freedom (from this existence as goblins), since religious merit due to doing good turns to others could not be had even by means of sacrifices. O goblins, I go to bathe in the water of Revā in the month of Vaiśākha when the Sun is in Aries. I am followed by these five men. Those five only had become the heaps of sins through folly. They will come for bath by my words, who am kind. Till then, by my order, stay there in this forest, (and be) free from grief. Going (there) and after bathing in the water of Narmadā, having fashioned men of darbha, I, bound by kindness, shall merge the helpless ones according to proper rites into the water of Narmadā in the month of Vaiśākha. Thus, there is no doubt that merely by bathing the lads made of darbha, you will be free from your existence as goblins in three days only.

Nārada said:

119-122. Having spoken like this, and being honoured by them who were firmly resolved, Muniśarman followed by these five (men) went (to Narmadā). Having gone there in the morning and having bathed there, he gave bath according to proper rites to the goblins fashioned from darbhas and by pronouncing the name (of each one of them). The goblins, remembered and bathed at the holy place by the sage pronouncing their names, became pious thereby, and being instantly free, went to heaven. When those five sinners of pale bodies, plunged by his word (i.e. on being told by him) in the water of Revā in the glorious month of Vaiśākha, they instantly became (men) of the lustre of gold only.

123-129. In the presence of all people Muniśarman made them hear (i.e. recited to them) the hymn destroying sins (and) they became men of great brilliance. But the men there did not touch them, though they were free from dust merely on bathing, due to the fear of the contact of sinners. Due to consideration for Muniśarman, and due to his religious authority, there was heard all of a sudden a divine voice: "These (men) are free from sins. What wonder is there that freedom from a heap of sins takes place in the case of those who, having Mukundy (only) as their heart and soul, have bathed in the month of Vaiśākha, and

have been here respectfully hearing the hymn removing sins? For all sinners this is a great hymn removing sins. For all sinners this is a great expiation, viz. to plunge in the morning into (the water at) a sacred place with devotion in the month of Vaiśākha, since, even those sinful goblins who were bathed (i.e. whose darbha-representations were bathed) by merely pronouncing their names, were remembered and made free by that pious Muniśarman."

130-133. Having heard these very wonderful words being (produced) in the sky, the men there instantly praised those five holy men, the month of Vaiśākha and the sage (Muniśarman) and (river) Revā. Then the king heard the hymn of praise which destroyed sins, devoutly hearing which a man is free from heaps of sins, and by merely hearing which sinners attained purity. Many others also became free from the sin caused by ignorance. When the mind of men is occupied with (copulating with) another man's wife, (snatching) another's wealth, and harming a being etc., then the expiation is eulogy (of Viṣṇu).

134-150. (One should say:) "I am always saluting Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu and Viṣṇu (only). I salute Viṣṇu who is in my mind, who is the controller, who is unmanifest, who is endless, who is undefeated, who is fit to be praised of all, who is without beginning or death, and who is powerful. Since Viṣṇu is in my heart, since Viṣṇu is in my mind, since Viṣṇu is the cause of (my) ego, since it is Viṣṇu, the author of the immovable and movable, who remains in me, therefore a sin perishes when he alone is reflected upon. Since, when reflected upon, or seen devoutly in a dream, he removes the sin, I salute that Upendra, that Viṣṇu, to whom a salutation is dear. In this propless world, I salute this eternal Viṣṇu, Madhusūdana, Acyuta, who supports my hand. My salutation to you, O lord of all, O controller, O powerful one, O supreme being, O Viṣṇu, O Hṛṣīkeśa, Hṛṣīkeśa, Hṛṣīkeśa, O Nṛsiṁha, O Govinda, O Bhūtabhāvana (i.e. cause of the beings), O Keśava. Bring to an end bad words, bad deeds and sins. Salutation to you. O Keśava, appease that very severe sin which ought not to have been done, which bad (deed) I, being under the sway of my heart, thought of. O Brahmaṇya, O god Govinda, O you who are solely devoted to the highest truth, O Jagannātha (i.e. the lord of the world), O Creator of the world,

O Acyuta, put an end to my sin. O Hṛṣīkeśa, O Puṇḍarīkākṣa, O Mādhava, let all my sins—committed in the afternoon, in the evening, in the mid-day or at night, through body, mind or words knowingly or unknowingly, perish by means of the utterance of the three names. O Hṛṣīkeśa, O Puṇḍarīkākṣa, may my sin committed through body, mind and words come to an end, O Mādhava. Let that sin which I committed while eating, drinking, standing, sleeping, keeping awake or seated, for getting money through body, mind or words, whether it is small or big, and which leads to a bad birth or to hell, be appeased by means of the narration of (the virtues of) Vāsudeva. When that Viṣṇu who is the highest Brahman, who is the highest abode and is pure, is praised, let the sin that there is, perish. That is Viṣṇu's position, having reached which the wise, free from (the sensations of) odour, touch etc. never return (to this world). Let him put an end to all that".

151-159. That man who would recite or listen to the eulogy putting an end to sins, is freed from sins due to body, mind and speech. Freed from (the influence of) evil planets, he goes to the highest position of Viṣṇu. Therefore, when a sin is committed, the eulogy crushing all sins should be muttered. Best men should recite (the eulogy)—the expiation for the streams (i.e. heaps) of sins. By means of expiations, excellent hymns of praise and vows the sin perishes. Then the deeds should be performed for excellent success, enjoyment and salutation. O lord of men, the sin committed during former existences, so also the sin committed in this world, melts away (i.e. disappears) instantly on hearing this eulogy. This is an axe for the trees in the form of sins. This is a wild fire for the fuel in the form of sins. O king, this eulogy is the sun for (i.e. dispelling) the darkness in the form of the heap of sins. I have disclosed this hymn—this secret—which I respectfully received from my father (i.e. Brahmā) to you and also due to compassion for the world. Even Viṣṇu himself is not able to describe the greatness of the religious merit of him who, O king, hears this auspicious account. Well-being to you, O great king, I am quickly going to Gaṅgā to bathe (in her water, as) this great month of Vaiśākha has arrived.

CHAPTER NINETYFIVE

More Rites and Rituals to be Observed in Vaiśākha

Sūta said:

1. Then the king joyfully asked the sage, after saluting him who was ready to go for his bath, the rite in brief, proper for bathing, giving (gifts) and other performances.

Ambarīṣa said:

2-3. O sage, in this month of Vaiśākha which rite (should be performed)? Which is superior penance? Which gift (should be given)? How should a bath (be taken)? How should Viṣṇu be worshipped? O brāhmaṇa sage, please tell it (to me). You know everything, and you are dear to Viṣṇu. Tell (me) in particular about the procedure of worship at a holy place.

Nārada said:

4-7. O best one, when the Sun enters Aries in the month of Vaiśākha, a man, remembering Viṣṇu, should bathe in a great river, at the bank of a river, in a big river, in a lake, in a spring, in a natural pond, or a reservoir that he would come across by chance. Having observed a fast, on the eleventh day of the bright half of Caitra or on the fifteenth day when the Sun enters Aries, he, with the consent of a brāhmaṇa, and after having taken a good bath and having worshipped Viṣṇu, should take up the vow of the (daily) bath in Vaiśākha.

8-11. "During the entire month of Vaiśākha, when the Sun has entered Aries, I shall bathe in the morning with (certain) restraints. May the killer of (the demon) Madhu (i.e. Viṣṇu) be pleased. May my bath on every day during the month of Vaiśākha be free from difficulty by the favour of (Viṣṇu,) the killer of (the demon) Madhu and the favour of the brāhmaṇas. O Murāri, O Madhusūdana, give me the fruit (as told in the sacred works), O lord, due to my bath (every) morning in the month of Vaiśākha, when the Sun has entered Aries. O Madhusūdana, since this month of Vaiśākha is dear to you, be a giver of fruit, and a killer of (my) sins due to my (daily) morning bath during that (month)."

12-13. Having uttered these words at that holy place, having washed his feet, and being controlled in speech, he, remembering god Nārāyaṇa, should bathe according to the proper rules. A man should prepare a holy place by reciting this basic hymn: 'Salutation to Nārāyaṇa'. This is said to be the basic hymn.

14-19a. Taking darbha in his hand, having sipped water according to the rules, and having bowed, a man should fashion a quadrangular having the measure of four cubits on all sides, and should invoke Gaṅgā by means of this basic hymn: "You have sprung up from Viṣṇu's feet. You belong to Viṣṇu. You have Viṣṇu as your deity. Therefore, protect us from the sin (committed by us) from birth to death. Vāyu has stated the number of holy places to be three crores and a half. O Jāhnavī, your holy places exist in heaven, on the earth and in the intermediate region between heaven and earth. Your name is Nandinī; among gods it is Nalinī. You (are) also (called) Dakṣā, Pṛthvī, Vihagā, Viśvagāthā, Śivapriyā, Vidyādharī, Mahādevī, so also Lokaprasādinī, and Kṣemaṅkarī, Jāhnavī, Śāntā, Śāntipradāyinī."

19b-23. He should pronounce these names at the time of bathing. Gaṅgā moving in the three worlds, is present there. Having with the cavities of the hands (i.e. palms) joined and put on his head, and having put (i.e. sprinkled) water on his head four, five or seven times, then one should like that bathe with clay, after having invoked it according to the rules (as): "O you earth, O you day, O you who are trampled over by horses, O you who are trodden over by chariots, O you who are trampled over by Viṣṇu, remove my sin—the misdeed I have done. You have been upheld by Viṣṇu, (in) the Boar (incarnation), having a hundred arms. Salutation to you of a good vow, and the araṇi (the cause) of the rise of all people."

24-27a. After thus having bathed, and having sipped water according to the rules, he should stand up and wear pure, white garments. Then for the satisfaction of the three worlds he should offer libations. He should first gratify Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Prajāpati, gods, yakṣas, so also serpents, gandharvas, celestial nymphs and demons, cruel snakes, eagles, trees, creatures and birds, vidyādharas, clouds, so also those moving in the sky.

27b-29a. (He should say:) "For the satisfaction of (these

and) the beings also who have no support and who are engaged in sinful deeds, this water is offered by me." A man should wear the sacred thread on the left shoulder and under the right armpit, and wear it round the neck while making offerings to gods. With devotion he should gratify offerings to gods. With devotion he should gratify men, sons of sages and sages.

29b-51. (He should say:) "Sanaka, Sanandana, so also Sanātana as the third, and Kapila, Āsuri, Voḍhu, and Pañcaśikha also. Let all of them always be satisfied with the water offered by me." With sacred rice-grains and water he should gratify all divine and brāhmaṇa sages like Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Vasiṣṭha, Bhṛgu, and Nārada. Then he should make the sacred thread hang down towards the left part of the body over the right shoulder and then wear it on the left shoulder and under the right armpit, after going (down) to the ground (i.e. after touching the ground) with his knees. With sesamum seeds, water and sandal, he should devoutly gratify the manes like: Agniṣvātta[1], Saumya, Haviṣmanta[2], so also Uṣmapa[3], Kavyānala, Barhiṣad[4], and Ājyapa[5] also. (He should say:) "Salutation to Yama, Dharmarāja, Mṛtyu, and Antaka, Vaivasvata, Kāla, Sarvabhūtakṣaya (i.e. who destroys all beings), to Udumbara, Dadhna, Nīla and Parameṣṭhin; salutation to Vṛkodara, Citra, Citragupta." Then, with darbhas in his hand, he should gratify the manes. Having, with proper rite, gratified his manes (mentioning them) with their names and family, so also his grandsires on the mother's side, he should recite this prayer: "May all kinsmen (in this existence) and the kinsmen in former existences, desiring (libations of) water from me, be fully gratified." Having sipped water according to the rules, he should, in front (of him) properly draw a lotus with sacred rice-grains, flowers, water and red sandal. By mentioning

1. Agniṣvātta—A class of manes who, on earth, neglected the sacrificial fire.

2. Haviṣmanta—Name of a class of manes regarded as progenitors of kṣatriyas and descended from Aṅgiras.

3. Uṣmapa—Literally, imbibing the stream of hot food; a class of manes.

4. Barhiṣad—Deceased ancestors.

5. Ājyapa—A class of manes who are the sons of Pulastya or of Kardama, and the ancestors of the vaiśya-order.

the names of the Sun, he should carefully make respectful offerings (to the Sun): "Salutation to you of the form of Viṣṇu, of the form of Brahmā, to you, O Sun, having a thousand rays, and who are all-lustre; salutation to you, having the body of Rudra; salutation to you, to whom devotees are dear. O Padmanābha, salutation to you, adorned with ear-rings and armlets; salutation to you who are the lord of all the worlds, who awaken the sleeping ones. You always observe all good and bad deeds. O Satyadeva, salutation to you. Favour me, O Bhāskara. O Divākara, I salute you. O Prabhākara, my salutation to you." Having in this way saluted the Sun, and having gone round (the lotus drawn in front of him) keeping it to his right seven times, he should touch a cow, a brāhmaṇa, and gold, and then go home. Having worshipped the (venerable ones) in the hermitage, he should then worship the image. Being restrained and self-possessed, a householder should first devoutly only worship Viṣṇu and again at both places, with devotion, and according to the rules. He who would especially worship Viṣṇu during the month of Vaiśākha, has worshipped him all the year round. He should perform the group of the vows in honour of Viṣṇu, for pleasing him, when the month of Vaiśākha has arrived and when (the Sun) the witness to (all) deeds has entered Aries. He should give many gifts like sesamum seeds, ghee etc., which destroy sins produced (i.e. committed) during crores of existences. A rich person should give, for the fulfilment of his desire, gifts like water, food, the (representations of a) cow made of sugar, sesamum etc. With his senses controlled one who bathes daily during the entire month of Vaiśākha, who mutters (prayers), who eats food fit to be eaten on days of fast, is freed from all sins.

52-60a. He who, being careful, eats once only (in a day), or eats at night, or eats without asking for the food during the month of Vaiśākha, gets all his desired objects. The rule is that one should have daily two baths outside (his house), at a river etc., according to proper rules, should eat food fit to be eaten on days of fast, should observe celibacy, and sleep on (bare) ground. (Observance of) a vow, (giving) gifts, muttering (hymns), sacrifice, and worship of Viṣṇu burns terrible sin committed during thousands of existences. As Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu)

when reflected upon, destroys sin, similarly (daily) bath in Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) done according to rules (destroys sins). A man should bathe every day at a holy place, should gratify his dead ancestors with sesamum seeds, should give gifts of jars of fragrant water etc., and should worship Viṣṇu during the month of Vaiśākha. This gives satisfaction to Viṣṇu. He should give water with sesamum seeds, gold, food, sugar, garments, ornaments; he should devoutly worship thrice a day lord Viṣṇu who is actually accompanied by pure Lakṣmī. He who gratifies brāhmaṇas with many golden pots containing sesamum seeds, or with jars full of water according to his capacity, removes (the sins of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

60b-81a. A man, being concentrated, should bathe in a river in the morning in the month of Vaiśākha, and worship Viṣṇu with devotion with seasonal flowers and fruits. Free from heretic talk, he should honour a brāhmaṇa according to his capacity. He should gratify him by giving gifts of garments, cows, jewels etc. and heaps of wealth, or should give him other valuable things in small quantity according to his capacity. Then, the man who has no possessions left, should worship Viṣṇu by offering him flowers in the month of Vaiśākha. He, being free from all sins, would emancipate a hundred of his dead ancestors. He would not experience grief for a hundred thousand existences. He has no fear from a disease; he is not bound by poverty. He would become a devotee of Viṣṇu, and is blessed in existence after existence. O hero, he would live in heaven for one hundred and eight thousand yugas and would again be (born) as a king. Enjoying various pleasures of a king happily, he, due to Viṣṇu's grace, then merges into Viṣṇu. O king, listen; I shall tell you in brief about the worship of Viṣṇu. (It is of three kinds:) as laid down in the Vedas, as laid down in the Tāntric works and that which is of mixed types (all of which) destroy sins. There is no end to him whose fullest extent is limitless; O king, there is no end to the rite of worship. Now it will be in due order explained properly. The worship of Viṣṇu is of three kinds: As laid down in the Vedic texts, as laid down in the Tantras (i.e. religious treatises teaching magical and mystical formularies for the worship of a deity), and mixed. The Vaidika or the mixed one is laid down for brāhmaṇas and others. The Tāntrika is enjoined

for even a śūdra who is Viṣṇu's devotee. A man having attained brāhmaṇahood as laid down in his own Veda (i.e. the Veda looked upon as most authoritative by him), should, being composed and practising celibacy, worship Viṣṇu according to the proper rite. By his teacher's consent, he should worship him on an altar or in (i.e. by offering oblations to) fire or the Sun, water, or his own heart or a brāhmaṇa, with devotion and wealth. Having brushed his teeth, he should first take bath for the purification of his body. At both times the bath should be taken to the accompaniment of hymns and with clay. The rites like the morning and evening prayers are prescribed in the Vedic texts and the Tantras. At the end of the worship he should properly fix the solemn vow to perform the observance, which purifies the rite. The image (of the deity) is said to be of eight kinds: (made) of a stone, of wood, of iron, smeared (with clay, i.e. of clay), drawn, of sand, metal and of jewels. It is of two kinds and said to be the abode of life (i.e. alive): movable and immovable. The invocation and allowing (the deity invoked) to go are not (necessary) in the case of the immovable (image) at the time of the worship of Viṣṇu. In the case of a movable one, there is an option. Both these (i.e. invocation and allowing it to go) take place on the altar (itself). In the case of that which is not smeared (i.e. which is not made of clay) bath is (enjoined). In the other case (i.e. in the case of one made of clay) only sprinkling (with water should be done). A sincere devotee should devoutly worship the deity with well-known articles as become available. O king, in the worship, bathing and decorating (the image) is best. They (i.e. articles) may be put on the altars or oblation with ghee (should be offered) into fire. Or the worship offered into (i.e. to) the Sun is the best, or on the altar with water etc.

81b-96a. Even water offered with faith by a devotee is best. Being pure, and having first got his seat prepared with darbhas, he should, after having collected material like fragrance, incense, flowers, lamp, food etc., sit facing the north, or facing the deity, for worshipping (it). Having made the nyāsas[1], he should then

1. Nyāsa—assignment of the various parts of the body to different deities, which is usually accompanied with prayers and corresponding gesticulations.

touch with his hand (the materials of) worship of Viṣṇu. He should properly make ready the pitcher (from which water) is to be sprinkled. With that water he has to worship the deity and sprinkle the materials of worship and himself. Sprinkling the three pots with water he should (fill them) with the material and offer them. He should cause to be given (i.e. should give) three pots for water for washing the feet, material of worship and sipping water. With the tuft of hair on the crown of the head, from which the (head-)dress is removed, he should consecrate them with the Gāyatrī-hymn. At the end of the recitation (of the hymn), he should meditate upon a small portion representing the life of the lord, as is (conceived) in the lotus of his heart, and cherished for the fulfilment (of his desires) on a lump made ready with air and fire. When the lump is occupied by the image as conceived by himself, he being devoted to it, should invoke the deity to the (place of) worship etc. and with its body placed there, he should worship it. He should keep ready the articles of worship like water for washing the feet, for bathing, and the materials of worship etc. Having prepared, in nine ways, a seat for Viṣṇu—a lotus with eight petals, bright with a pericarp and filaments—he should, for success at both places (i.e. in this world and in the next), worship according to the ways laid down in the Vedic texts and in Tantras, worship Viṣṇu's (disc called) Sudarśana, (conch called) Pāñcajanya, mace, sword, arrow, bow, plough, pestle, Kaustubha, garland and (the mark called) Śrīvatsa. He should also worship by sprinkling etc., at their respective places, with their faces turned towards him, Nanda, Sunanda, Garuḍa, Pracaṇḍa and Caṇḍa. So also Mahābala, Bala, Kumuda, Kumudekṣṇa, Durgā, Vināyaka, Vyāsa, Viśvaksena (i.e. Viṣṇu), teachers and (other) gods. He, Viṣṇu's devotee, should always, when he has the money (to do so), adorn Viṣṇu with sandal, (fragrant root of a plant called) uśīra, camphor, saffron, agallochum, and fragrant water, with (proper) hymns—like the Vedic Svarṇagharma, or the incantation in honour of Viṣṇu, or the hymn called Puruṣa-sūkta, so also with waving the light etc. before the deity, with garments, sacred thread, ornaments, leaves, garlands, fragrance and unguents.

96b-101a. The worshipper should give, with faith, water for washing the feet, for sipping, sandal, flowers, sacred rice-grains, perfumes, incense, and other articles to be offere. He should keep ready jaggery, rice boiled in milk, ghee, baked cake, small round cakes of flour, sweetmeats, milk, curd, ghee, and offering of eatables. Day after day there should be anointing the body, massaging it, showing the mirror, brushing the teeth, bath and all songs. In a basin as laid down according to the rules and with a round belt and altars, he should lay fire and gather it on all sides, and having diffused water with his hand, and sprinkled it, should offer fuel according to the rules. Taking the articles with holy water, he should sprinkle ghee with water used for sprinkling.

101b-119. He should meditate upon and worship (Viṣṇu) who resembles heated gold, whose four hands shine with a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus, and who is calm and who has put on a garment (soft) like the filaments of lotuses, who has put on a bright crown, bracelets, a girdle, and excellent armlets, who has the Śrīvatsa on his chest, whose Kaustubha is shining, who has put on a garland of wood-flowers. Having worshipped the wooden pieces having ghee (sprinkled over them) along with the oblation, having thrown two portions of ghee, and having sprinkled clarified butter and having offered oblation covered with ghee, havingthen worshipped and saluted he should offer the oblation to his associates. O brāhmaṇa, remembering Nārāyaṇa, he should mutter the basic prayer. Then having given (water for) sipping, he should keep the leftovers for Viṣṇu. Always singing and describing his deeds with words he should offer him perfume used to scent breath, and fragrant tāmbūla etc. Causing to hear and listening to good stories he should have leisure for a moment. Having praised him with hymns, and with various eulogies from the Purāṇas and Prākrita (provincial or vernacular) panegyrics, he should, (prostrating himself before him) like a stick, salute him, saying, 'O lord, favour me'. Putting his head on his (i.e. of the image) feet and joining his hands, (he should say), "O lord, protect me, who have taken refuge with you, and who am afraid of the ocean having a shark-like death." With these words he should put on his head the leftovers of the articles offered to Viṣṇu, and should cause

to stay in himself the lustre fit to be put into (his heart). A man with faith should worship wherever there is a foot-mark of the idols etc. A man should worship him who dwells in all beings and in himself also, by means of purificatory rites and abstract meditation. Due to this he obtains desired welfare from Viṣṇu. Having installed the idol, he should get constructed a strong temple, so also charming flower-garden for accomplishing the worship (of the idol), so also should (introduce) worship, pilgrimage, festivals etc. for the continuation of the worship etc. on the parvan days and also every day. Having presented a (piece of) land, a market, a city, a village etc. (to the deity) he should reach intimate union with it. By means of the installation (of the idol), one would get sovereign empire; by (building) a temple one would get (happiness in) the three worlds; by worship etc. one would reach Brahmā's heaven; and by the three he would attain similarity (with the deity). By means of firm, desireless devotion, one obtains him (i.e. Viṣṇu) only. He who worships Viṣṇu like this obtains loyal devotion. That (really) is the body (of a man) which is white due to the dust (clinging to the body) while saluting Kṛṣṇa; it is auspicious like him. Those are the very charming eyes earned by means of penance, by which Viṣṇu is seen. That (alone) is the pure mind, which is white like the moon and a conch, and which pervades Mādhava. O king, that is the tongue, speaking softly, which repeatedly praises Viṣṇu. Women and śūdras also should worship (Viṣṇu) with the basic hymn, with devotion and according to the manner advised by the teacher; so also by other devotees of Viṣṇu. I have told you all this worship of Mādhava which is purifying. O king, do it especially in the month of Vaiśākha.

Sūta said:

120. Having heard these words of Brahmā's son (Nārada), which were lovely, auspicious, and pure, the king, best among the devotees of Viṣṇu, being curious, saluted him with the palms of his hands joined, and said:

Ambarīṣa said:

121-124. I am the lord of the entire earth; my order is always obeyed; I serve the wise; I have dedicated my heart to

the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu; I have pleased the brāhmaṇas heartily. I am the gem from the family of well-known kings; I always have a liking for piety. I am successful. I am given to (appreciation of) beauty, appearance of bravery and to charity. I am having good sons. I have conquered a host of enemies. Due to some religious merit I have been born of a pure mind, and have been associated with the wealth of such virtues. From where again have I obtained this beautiful wife, the embodiment of religious merit and resembling Lakṣmī? O sage, tell me all these good deeds I did in the former existence. O you treasure of compassion, you know everything.

Nārada said:

125-132. This one who is your extremely beautiful wife, of a good conduct, was in the former existence a prostitute named Rūpavatī. This beautiful lady, performing auspicious deeds by the direction of a brāhmaṇa, would live (i.e. lived) as a prostitute as indicated (below). You were a goldsmith known as Devadāsa. You were, in a former existence, the lord, the paramour of her (who was then known as) Rucī. This Rūpavatī remained on the path of righteousness—the best knowledge—for (i.e. while) spending money (obscure!). Once on hearing about the religious merit due to the (daily) bath in Vaiśākha she, following (the path of) righteousness bathed when the Sun had entered Aries. The diligent, beautiful, prostitute Rūpavatī, always devoutly and respectfully saluted and gave gifts to a brāhmaṇa. You, Devadāsa, bound by love (towards her) were always advised by her. You intentionally and respectfully bathed in the month of Vaiśākha. At that time, at the beginning of Tretāyuga, on having got the third day (i.e. when the third day arrived), she spoke to the goldsmith Devadāsa, with respect:

The prostitute said:

133-135. Fashion an excellent (image of) Madhusūdana, Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu). Having worshipped the deity with these barley grains and having gratified fire, I shall give it to a brāhmaṇa, with the consent of brāhmaṇas. In Purāṇas, this gift is said to be inexhaustible there (i.e. in the next world). I have heard from the brāhmaṇas that this Tṛtīyā (i.e. the third day of

Vaiśākha) is called 'Akṣaya (tṛtīyā)' of the bright half of Vaiśākha. It gives inexhaustible fruit. On this day I shall give this (image of) immutable Viṣṇu (to a brāhmaṇa).

Nārada said:

136-144. Hearing these sweet words of her, the goldsmith, truthfully and free from theft (i.e. without taking away a portion of the gold), fashioned an extremely beautiful image of Viṣṇu, thinking it to be meant for a religious purpose. She gave that beautiful image, having the characteristics of the (beautiful) moon as indicated, after she had taken bath, to a brāhmaṇa according to the proper rites, after worshipping it on that day of Akṣaya (tṛtīyā), O king. After some time, that prostitute, devoted to religion, died. Then that Devadāsa also died when (the span of) his life was over. Due to that religious merit, O king, that Devadāsa, reached (i.e. was born on) the earth as you, endowed with all virtues. That Rūpavatī too, due to that religious merit became your wife, full of love, named Kāntimatī. O hero, many desires are due to former deeds. Their courses are varied. O dear one, they are not known even by the wise. Therefore, there is no doubt that (the rites) should be performed during this month of Vaiśākha. It was kept as a secret by that god Brahmā and by Viṣṇu.

145-148. The religious merit due to the month of Vaiśākha is not obtained by those who have the company of the bad, who have no other knowledge (like that of religion), who are not restrained, who are bereft of the practices of the stages (of the human life), who have not visited holy places, who have not practised vows. The vow of the month of Vaiśākha is not (possible) for them in whose mouth the words, 'Govinda, Keśava, Mukunda, Hari, Murāri, Lakṣmī-nivāsa, Madhusūdana, Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu' do not find a place. Those who do not properly listen to the words of the good, which are very beneficial, and are the nectar in the form of the deeds of Viṣṇu, and who do not see (i.e. visit) the temples of (Viṣṇu) the lord of Lakṣmī, do not obtain (the religious merit of) the vow in the month of Vaiśākha. They, who have not served their teachers, who have not given (in marriage) their adorned daughter to the bridegroom on his arrival, and who have not taught their sons the practices of

modesty etc. do not get (the religious merit of) the vow of the month of Vaiśākha.

Sūta said:

149-150. O brāhmaṇas, having thus advised the lord of men, the sage, the foremost among the knowers of hymns, took his leave, and, honoured by him (i.e. the king), went to Gaṅgā to bathe (in accordance with the vow) in the month of Vaiśākha. The king too, of a pure fame, thinking of him (i.e. Viṣṇu) only, performed, along with his wife, and with a religious mind, the rite of the month of Vaiśākha, as ordained by the sage.

CHAPTER NINETYSIX

Deeds Leading to Hell and Heaven

The sages said:

1-2. O Sūta, O Sūta, O you very wise one, live for a hundred years, since we were made to hear (i.e. you told us) what is beneficial to the world. Again talk the most. We (shall) drink your words. Again and again drinking those words, we are not satisfied, O Sūta.

Sūta said:

3-6a. In this case also there is known an old account—a dialogue between the prime world among the worlds (i.e. the Earth) and the lord of the world. The height of the Earth was six thousand yojanas and the expanse is three thousand yojanas. Thus making the Earth to have (an area of) nine thousand yojanas, he first held the Earth with his large left tooth and lifted her. He held the Earth for a thousand divine years. In course of the legendary account of religious importance she politely said to the lord:

The Earth said:

6b-11a. These twelve months and three hundred and sixty days (constitute a year). Which of these is the best, (most) auspicious, and dear to you? The month of Kārtika, when the Sun is in Libra is sacred. The month of Māgha when the Sun is in Capricorn is said to be sacred in (i.e. by) the Purāṇas. The wise say that when the Sun is in Aries, it is the (sacred) month of Vaiśākha. Mārgaśirṣa is also said to be purifying among the (twelve) months. Thus these are said to be the sacred months. Certain days also are (said to be) sacred. There are the beginnings and ends of the yugas. So also there are the beginnings of the kalpas also. Tell me the most sacred month among all the months. O you who are full of all sacrifices, O you glorious one, tell me (about) any one chosen by you.

Varāha (*i.e. Viṣṇu*) *said*:

11b-19a. I am always to be adored with devotion by those mean men who worship me in the month of Vaiśākha with or without rites. O you beautiful one, in Vaiśākha Hiraṇyākṣa was killed, so also Madhu. Having killed these two first demons, I lifted you up. The religion based on the three Vedas, and the settlement about knowledge and the castes took place in the month of Vaiśākha in Tretāyuga. Therefore, Vaiśākha is dear to me. On the third day of the bright half of Vaiśākha Tretāyuga commenced. So also the practices based on the three Vedas started, and they advanced. That day is called Akṣaya (i.e. inexhaustible) in the world. It is dear to Viṣṇu for bathing, giving gifts, worshipping, offering śrāddhas, muttering (names of the deity) and offering oblations to the (dead) ancestors. To them who worship Viṣṇu with barley-grains and carefully perform a śrāddha I give all excellent things desired by their minds. Those religious men are fortunate who give gifts, who every day worship Viṣṇu by means of various sacrifices. The fruit of him (i.e. which he gets) who worships me in Vaiśākha, is greater than (the fruit obtained) by those.

19b-27. O venerable lady, listen to the meritorious fruit of that which is done is Vaiśākha, such as a bath, gifts, muttering (hymns), sacrifice, penance, sacrificial rite and other vows. For

ten, five and seven crores of the periods of Manu they have obtained my proximity and remain without fear. Even if all the cruel Planets are situated in the twelfth and the eighth (places in the horoscope of a man) all of them become pleasing by means of the (daily) morning bath in Vaiśākha. The dead ancestors in number(s) like four of him who being solely devoted feeds brāhmaṇas in the month of Vaiśākha, are satiated by each lump of rice. Those who give very sweet foods, or meals consisting of barley-grains or with water mixed with sesamum seeds, so also umbrellas and garments, so also (shoes) capable of protecting the feet, are blessed, and give delight to Viṣṇu. Here (i.e. during the month) especially sesamum seeds with honey should be given for great religious merit and for the destruction of long(-standing) sin. Who can measure even for hundreds of crores of years the religious merit obtained by men when such (things) are done? A man (doing as above) obtains in this world the wealth in the form of sons and grandsons, long life, and whatever is desired, and in the next world he comes to me only. The series of sins of (i.e. committed during) many existences of a man melts away by bathing at dawn at a holy place according to the rites or of him who resorts to it.

28. He who, abandoning the Vaiśākha-vow, would practise some other vow, gives up a great gem in his hand, and asks for a clod.

Sūta said:

29-39. In this way the lord of the world, the mighty first god spoke in the world with reference to the month of Vaiśākha. What is the use of talking much in this matter, O brāhmaṇas? There is nothing that is not obtained by worshipping Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha. In this matter listen to a very wonderful, ancient account, and the dialogue between a brāhmaṇa and the glorious Yama. In Madhyadeśa at the foot of the Yāmuna mountain between Gaṅgā and Yamunā there was a village called Mahāgrāma of brhāmaṇas. There many learned brāhmaṇas lived. Yama said to a man who was dark and tawny, had red eyes, whose hair (stood) up and whose shanks, eyes and nose were like those of a crow: "O you, go to Mahāgrāma, and having gone there, bring a brāhmaṇa, Yajñadattaka by name, who is

born in Vasiṣṭha's family, who is settled in tranquillity, who is learned and who is skilled in sacrificial rites. Do not bring the other one who belongs to the same family, (and who lives) by his side, for he has similar qualities, is like him, in learning and birth. In form and characteristics he, the best one, is like him. Bring him, I have to worship him as advised." He went and did (exactly) the opposite of Yama's order. He brought him only whom Yama had disallowed. Yama got up (when he came) and honouring him, he, knowing religious merit, said: "Take him (back). Bring that other one".

Sūta said:

40. When Yama said these words, the brāhmaṇa, disgusted with going (i.e. unwilling to go), said to Yama.

The brāhmaṇa said:

41. Why was I brought here (and) why do you impel me (to go back)? O lord, I am not at all eager to go to the mortal world again.

Yama said:

42-46. Here the meritorious persons whose life has ended, would stay. This is known as Dharmaloka, belonging to Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). This entire land is full of happiness. I am Dharmarāja, its lord; I give the beings happiness or unhappiness according their religious merit or the opposite of it. I am of the form of Yama who gives hell (i.e. who sends to hell) the sinful men. In the same way I am religious merit embodied, who gives heaven to the meritorious. O brāhmaṇa, today only go (back) to your house as you had come (here). Still ten years' span of your life remains (to be enjoyed). When your life comes to an end, you will obtain this world. You (may) ask anything else that you want to ask. I shall explain it to you.

The brāhmaṇa said:

47-49a. Tell me (about) that great religious merit, having done which heaven would be (obtained). In deciding what is religious and what is irreligious, you are the authority, O god, I

have duly to go back to my house, then tell me due to which act men fall into hell. Please tell me (also) all that by which men go to heaven.

Yama said:

49b-76a. Those men who are averse to religion through their deeds, mind and words, and who are without (i.e. who do not have) devotion to Viṣṇu, go to hell. Those men who look upon Brahmā, Śaṅkara and Viṣṇu as different (from one another), and who are detached from knowledge about Viṣṇu, go to hell. That man who, through lust or delusion, gives up the act proper for his family or country, and would do something else, goes to hell. A man who worships what should not be worshipped, and does not worship what should be worshipped, and is disinterested in the knowledge about Viṣṇu, suffers in many hells. That sinner who dies as a wealthy man without giving to his dead ancestors, deities, brāhmaṇas, or his mortal relatives, goes to many hells. He who discriminates in (the distribution of) food, when all kinds of food are ready, and eats without making an offering to all deities, goes to (lives in) hell for a long time. O brāhmaṇa, those rich men who earn wealth by too much deceiving beings and the religious hypocrites experience grief. Those who, when proper time has come, do not devoutly offer śrāddha through atheism or greed or delusion are roasted in hell. That sinful man who causes obstruction when wealth is being given to brāhmaṇas, would go to hell. That man who, when the presents made in common, being deluded, takes them all alone, and who is inclined to atheism, would live in the abode of hell. His not being patient with other's virtues would be the cause (of his falling into hell). The great sin that has arisen is the cause of (his falling into) hell, who, after (some) time abandons his faultless, good-hearted wife and goes (away). That man who would not support their glory would fall into hell. That man who, being deluded, describes impiety as piety, is a sceptic, is an atheist, lives in hell. That man who has one idea in mind, and would speak in a different way, and would make the heart (of another person) displeased, would live in hell. Those men who, having showed disrespect for the narration (of the virtues) of the lord, go to the terrible hell due to

that sinful deed. Those who, even after seeing the door of (the temple of) the lord or (even after hearing) his name or the sacred text or (even after seeing) his attendants, do not salute etc. become the residents of hell. Those men who torment their wives without their faults, or abandon their good wives, go to hell. The man who does not listen to the words of his teacher or to the sacred texts, and who torments the hearts of others dwells in hell. Onewho feeds his own belly with sweets while his relatives and children are looking on, is merely a glutton, and goes to hell. The atheist who would not take bath in the morning in rivers etc. (when the Sun is) in Libra, Capricorn or Aries, would live in hell. O brāhmaṇa, he who does not, through love or respect, stand up on seeing Viṣṇu's devotee, is the guest in hell (i.e. goes to hell). Those who obstruct the ways by means of (pieces of) wood, spikes or darts or stones, go to hell. Those who do not reflect upon Viṣṇu, the first god, the controller, the great lord of the entire world, go to hell. Those men who cut off the livelihood of (a man through) farming, who break a family, who cut off (the bond of) love, so also (of) hope, go to hell. That foolish man who would test the brāhmaṇas who are distressed for want of livelihood, and who have come for eating food, should be known as a guest of (i.e. would go to) hell. Those fools who do not show compassion for a forlorn, poor, old devotee of Viṣṇu, afflicted by a disease, go to hell. Those who have not restrained their senses, having taken up vows, and who later give them up, go to hell.

76b-100. O brāhmaṇa, listen as to how the kind men go to heaven. I shall tell something in brief and through respect for you. This is (what) the ancient text (says): "Those who worship god Hari, Jiṣṇu, the ancient Viṣṇu, the unborn Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, the four-armed Viṣvaksena (i.e. Viṣṇu), who meditate upon the divine man, and remember Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu), obtain the position of Viṣṇu. Narration (of the virtues) of Viṣṇu—this alone is auspiciousness, this alone is earning money, this alone is the fruit of life. By means of the narration (of the virtues) of Viṣṇu, the god of gods and of unlimited lustre, sins melt away as darknees (melts away) at daybreak. Those men who, full of faith, every day sing the verse about Viṣṇu, and who are always engaged in their own duties, who, having given up

all worldly occupations, glorify Viṣṇu only, go to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, the fearful messengers of Yama do not approach the men who, even though they are sinners, are devoted to the muttering of prayers. They do not see anything else in case of the beings except the narration of the virtues of Viṣṇu, which is an expiation putting an end to all sins. Those men who, when solicited, are delighted, who, having given gifts, speak agreeably, and who abandon the fruit of gifts (made by them) go to heaven. Those mortals who avoid sleep by day, who put up with everything, who are the asylums on the parvan days, go to heaven. Those men who never mention the faults even of their enemies, (but) mention their virtues (only), go to heaven. Those men who, having seen the wealth of others are not distressed through jealousy, (but,) being delighted, congratulate them, go to heaven. Those who, of a firm resolution, show respect for the statements in the sacred texts, in active worldly life or in resignation of worldly acts, go to heaven. Those men who, born in any family, are kind, successful, tender, and of a good behaviour, go to heaven. Those men who, being pure and good, never take delight, through act, mind, or words, in the wives of others, go to heaven. Those men who knowing their capacity, always do the acts that are laid down (in the sacred texts), as told (in the sacred texts), go to heaven. He who always has faith in the religious act performed mentally, physically, or through words, and who is liked by the good, would become a guest in (i.e. goes to) heaven. That man who puts up with the impulse of his speech, his mind, his belly or his generative organ (i.e. impulse of sex), becomes a resident of heaven. Those wise men who take delight in virtues, whose speech is (directed) towards the sacred texts, whose mind is (interested) in true spiritual knowledge, go to heaven. Those men who preserve their vow from (the influence of) anger, who protect wealth without (being influenced by) jealousy, who preserve their knowledge from (being influenced by) pride or insult, and preserve (i.e. keep) themselves (away) from faults, who keep their mind free from greed, from lust, who protect (i.e. keep away) piety from (the influence of) bad company, go to heaven. Those men who, on the eleventh day of the bright or the dark half of a month are engaged in observing a fast, go to heaven. The day

of Ekādaśī (the eleventh day of a fortnight) is created as a mother for all children, as a medicine for the sick, and for the protection of all people. There is no other protection for the feet like Ekādaśī (since it makes one go along the right path).

101-110. Men fasting on that day according to proper rules, go to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, having quickly shaken off the sin committed by the eleven organs of sense and action, a man, being pleased, would go to heaven. Thousands of horse-sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūya sacrifices are not equal even to the sixteenth part of the Ekādaśī-fast. All sacrifices, all holy places and austerities, gifts like the great gifts are on one side, while the vow (in honour) or Viṣṇu is on the other side (i.e. the sacrifices etc. do not stand comparison with the vow in honour of Viṣṇu). The creator had weighed together the religious merit due to the vow (in honour) of Viṣṇu and the religious merit due to sacrifices etc. The former would be heavier. O brāhmaṇa, I do not control those who are devoted to Viṣṇu's day (i.e. the eleventh day of the lunar fortnight) and who talk endlessly about Viṣṇu; I am especially afraid of them. Their son or their grandson who observes a fast on the eleventh day strongly emancipates, along with himself, a hundred men (of his family). Therefore, a man should observe a fast on the eleventh day of both the fortnights. He is the only abode of enjoyment and salvation. Jayā, Vijayā and Jayantī, Pāpanāśinī, Trispṛśā, Vañjulī, and the excellent Pakṣasaṁvardhinī, the other one to be known as Tiladugdhā, so also Akhaṇḍadvādaśī, the one called Manorathā, so also the excellent Bhīmadvādaśikā—these are the many varieties of Dvādaśī (the twelfth day of the lunar fortnight).

111-114. Those who are capable of (observing) these vows have remained in Brahman. Those who listen to religious texts, are convinced of piety, who do what is agreeable to children, go to heaven. The dead ancestors of those men who on one day—on the new-moon day—of every month, are engaged in the vow of a śrāddha, are gratified; and they are blessed and go to heaven. Those good men, when suitable meals (are ready), respectfully offer eatables without changing the complexion on their face (i.e. without showing unwillingness), go to heaven.

115-117a. Those men who are bereft of truth and even full of passion, (but) are devoted to Madhusūdana, Nārāyaṇa, the

lord of everything, having endless religious merit, go to heaven. Those who, of a good conduct and solely given to bathing and giving (gifts), resort to Vitastā, Yamunā, Sītā, and the auspicious Godāvarī river, never see the path to hell.

117b-120. Those who dip in Narmadā, giving happiness in this world, and are even pleased at her sight, go, after having shaken off their sins to the world of the great lord, and enjoy there for a long time. Those men who, for three nights (i.e. three days) have bathed at the bank of Carma-river, and especially in the hermitage of Vyāsa, are said to be the residents of heaven. Those who die in the water of Gaṅgā, at Prayāga, Kedāra and Puṣkara, in Vyāṣa's hermitage, Prabhāsa, go to Viṣṇu.

121-124. Those who die while practising abstract meditation at Dvāravatī, Kurukṣetra, and those who have the letters 'Hari' in their mouths, are not reborn. O brāhmaṇa, those who have stayed, even for three nights, at the city of Dvāravatī, and take bath at the bank of Gomatī, are blessed, and are dear to Viṣṇu. Those who have stayed at the abode of Nara and Nārāyaṇa, and have resorted to Nanda on the earth for three nights are dear to Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, those men who have lived near Viṣṇu for six months, have indeed become one with Viṣṇu, and would remove the sin (of a person) on merely looking at him.

125-127a. Those men who bathe in the water of Maṇikarṇikā, the holy water secured after many existences, and having reached Kāśī salute Viśveśa, are venerable even to me. Those men who die according to the sacred command after having worshipped Viṣṇu on the earth with darbhas and sesamum seeds, after having spread sesamum seeds on the ground and after having given iron and milch cow (to a brāhmaṇa), go to heaven, O brāhmaṇa.

127b-142. Those who die after having produced sons, and having installed them on the position that has come down from the father, grandfather etc. (i.e. which is hereditary), and who are not having the feeling of mineness and egotism, also go to heaven. Those men also who have turned away from stealing, and who are content with their own wealth, who derive their livelihood due to their good luck, go to heaven. Those men, who, at the time of welcoming (a person) speak gentle, sweet and natural

words, not afflicting (the person) go to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, those men who know the consequence (of their deeds) on the heaping up of the fruits of their auspicious or inauspicious deeds, go to heaven. Those men who increase the enthusiasm of those who are occupied with (earning) wealth and religious merit and follow the path of righteousness, are delighted in heaven. He who gives fire (i.e. warmth) in the cold season, so also he who gives water in summer, who gives shelter in the rainy season, is delighted in heaven for a long time. He who devoutly offers a śrāddha at all auspicious times, also at the time of all regular and occasional rites, enjoys the world of gods. Giving gifts to a poor man, forgiveness in a lord, penance of the young (i.e. in youth), silence of the learned, cessation of desires in the case of those used to happiness, and compassion to beings, take (men) to heaven. The connection (of a being), with deeds is twofold: it is due to sin and to religious merit. The decision in this matter is done only after resorting to truth only. Penance accompanied with meditation leads to the crossing of the ocean of the worldly existence. Sin is said to lead to a fall. This is true. There is no doubt about it. That (merit) of a man, void of religious merit, and (though) endowed with might, service and valour, melts away with force. In the difficult places on the mountains there are tall and well-nourished trees. Though dense, they fall along with their roots due to the force of wind. Similarly, those who do not practise truth, go to Yama's abode. Everything else is common to all beings. Righteousness alone is the strength (that differs from individual to individual), due to which a being is rescued in this world and in the next world. I have narrated to you in brief all this giving (i.e. leading to) the path to heaven. What more do you desire to hear?

CHAPTER NINETYSEVEN

More Sinful and Meritorious Deeds

The brāhmaṇa said:

1-4. Even a fool knows that a man doing auspicious deeds does not go to hell; in the same way a man engaged in doing sinful deeds does not go to heaven. By those skilful in (good) conduct is obtained the happiness of heaven by means of various sacrifices, and desired vows, gifts, muttering of prayers and truthfulness. Heaven is obtained by sages who have the wealth of knowledge and (good) conduct and who are the masters of the Vedas, due to religious merit and not by means of sacrifices. By a man who is attached to his family, even though having much wealth, much wealth in charity cannot be given without (i.e. unless he has) liberality.

5-9. In Kaliyuga the rites especially like Agnihotra (keeping the sacred fire continuously) are difficult to perform. O lord, the merit due to charity also is thought to be difficult. O you who show what is righteousness and what is non-righteousness, especially tell me that by which pious acts of little exertion religious merit can be stored. So tell me that pious act, the best among all such acts, having done which the entire sin is exhausted, due to which wealth, grains, glory, religious merit, and (span of) life increases, by which there would be intimacy in the mortal world, and heaven would be inexhaustible (i.e. would be obtained permanently), by which actually Nārāyaṇa, causing fearlessness to his devotees would be pleased. Due to his favour desire is on the palm of the hand (i.e. can easily be controlled).

10-13. O Yama, tell me that (rite) by which a fruit greater than that of all sacrifices, penance, gifts, resorting to sacred places, is obtained. If I am to be favoured by you by means of teaching me about religious merit, then please tell me that which is the essence of all pious acts. The wise ones have, after recollecting, narrated the expiations of sins as and when (they are to be taken). O god, it is not possible for men to do each one of them. So if there is (only) one pious act that would remove all sins, then tell it (to me).

Sūta said:

14. Having spoken thus, the best brāhmaṇa, being self-subdued, and desiring to know the subtle moral merit, praised Yama who was Righteousness embodied.

The brāhmaṇa said:

15-23a. Salutation to you, who destroy everything. Salutation to you, O lord of the worlds. Salutation to you of the form of a god, who give (i.e. show) the path to heaven, who are of the nature of the sacred texts; salutation to you, O Dharmarāja. You protect the earth, the gods, the atmosphere, the heaven, (the worlds like) Mahas, Jana, Tapas, and Satya. So also everything is protected by you. There is no world—immobile or mobile which is devoid of you. The world seized by you instantly perishes. You are the soul of all the beings. You have the nature of goodness. You are the rajas (i.e. passion) of the rājasa people (i.e. people endowed with the quality of rajas or passion). You are the tamas (i.e. the quality of darkness) of the tāmasa ones (i.e. those who are endowed with the quality of darkness). Of the quadrupeds, O god, you are one having four horns and three eyes. You have seven hands; you are bound in three ways; salutation to you, O you of the form of a bull. Righteousness, full of all sacrifices, is the expansion of your body. O lord of the worlds, you are (now) actually seen (by me). O god, my repeated salutations to you. Remaining in the hearts of all you are the observer of religious merit and sins. Therefore, you are the ruler of the beings. O god, you are a donor and a controller. O god, you are the founder of righteousness. On the earth you hold the sceptre. Tell me the well-determined essence of all the meritorious deeds.

Yama said:

23b-29. O brāhmaṇa, I am especially pleased with your eulogy. So also, O best one, you are respectable to me due to your following the practices laid down in the sacred texts. O brāhmaṇa, I, being pleased by your modesty shall tell you the great secret of me, though it should not be told, which I have determined after taking out the essence of all (sacred words), which greatly banishes (i.e. takes out one) from the group of

great hells. Those Purāṇas and sacred texts are for (i.e. lead to) the delusion of the mobile and immobile world. Let them speak about that great deity only in their sacred precepts and rites. (But) in the established view of the thinking people Viṣṇu alone is decided to be the lord when (the views of) all sacred texts are put together. Śiva, Brahmā and Viṣṇu—these three only are looked upon as the Trinity. As the lamp is (burning) due to fire, the wick and the oil, in the same way, O brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu (shines with these). Having devoutly propitiated Viṣṇu, a man should obtain the auspicious Goloka. When Viṣṇu is propitiated, all desires remain on the palm of the hand.

30-32. O brāhmaṇa, of all pious acts giving (gifts) alone is the greatest. Sin perishes by means of giving (gifts), and everything is obtained through giving (gifts). Giving (gifts) is said to be of five types: regularly prescribed, occasional, optional, and the other one is of the nature of prosperity, and the last one is the highest (type of) charity. Something should be carefully given in the morning, in the noon and afternoon. This is said to be regularly prescribed.

33-41. A man, desiring his well-being should not pass a day without (giving gifts). Gift given (by the members) in a family, stands by here or there (i.e. is useful in some way or the other). In him who, being thoughtless, would, through folly eat (all alone) I produce a disease keeping off his enjoyments. That door contented with the deeds (of the inmates), giving great trouble, having gentle breezes (i.e. not fully opened for guests), is tormenting. Those who have not given to brāhmaṇas and gods at the three times (of the day), and who eat (all) alone, have (indeed) committed great sin. I purify them by means of fearful expiations and fasts like those that dry up the bodies etc., O brāhmaṇa. As the shoe-maker would mercilessly cleanse the hide in the bowl by means of whips etc., or would tear open a bad substance, similarly in the form of a physician I purify a sinner by means of proper use of herbs, and by means of astringent, bitter (medicines), hot water (etc.) tormenting him, and in no other way. There is no doubt about this. Before him (i.e. in his presence) others enjoy pleasures as desired by them. What should I do? I am capable. He has not given excellent

gifts. In the form of a great disease he would be prohibited (from enjoyments).

42-43a. O brāhmaṇa, the sinners have not with faith and capacity, given the gifts which should be regularly given. I will burn with terrible means, those who have come like that (i.e. without giving gifts).

43b-51. Before (i.e. to) you I shall explain the occasional gifts. That gift which is carefully given when the day of Mahāparvan has come, or when one has reached a sacred place, or on a day like the death-anniversary of a dead ancestor, or in months like Vaiśākha, is called occasional. I shall explain to you the time of an optional gift, which gives fruit, has a vow etc. for its object and which is intended (to have) the desired fruit. A man overcome with a feeling of devotion, gets the fruit like that (gift) (i.e. proper for the gift) due to the purifying (nature) of the gift which is duly said to be harmonious in all its constituents. I shall (now) explain (the gift) called *Abhyudaya* (i.e. leading to prosperity), which is said to be in the sacrifices etc., so also the rites like the ceremony performed at the birth of a child or thread ceremony or marriage; O brāhmaṇa, the gift of the nature of (i.e. leading to) prosperity is said to consist in careful installation of a flag, (images of) deities in a palace etc. It brings about growth in progeny, and gives enjoyments, glory, and happiness in heaven. And (now) I shall explain the last (kind of) gifts. O best brāhmaṇa, listen. Realising the loss of sex (i.e. sexual desire) and being oppressed by old age, a man should carefully give gifts. He should entertain hope about nothing.

52-58. 'What will happen to these my sons, wife, relatives, brothers (and sisters) and my friends without me when I die? How shall I again continue to live like a poor man?' Thinking like this, he, a fool bound by hundreds of bonds of hope due to his (ill) luck only, dies; and then his sons weep. Being oppressed by grief, and with their hearts full of confusion, they do not devise even a small gift at that time. When this time has passed, and when their great grief has gone, they forget (to give) the gift, or through delusion, do not give it. Knowing that the father is dead, the bond of love recedes. O brāhmaṇa, he who is dead, and who is controlled by Yama's nooses, who is over-

come with thirst and hunger, who is very much oppressed by many agonies, is, for a long time, roasted in an awful hell.

59-68. Therefore, there is no doubt, one should give gifts. To whom do the sons and the grandsons belong? To whom does the wife or the wealth belong? In this world nobody belongs to anybody else. There gifts should be given. O brāhmaṇa, one should according to one's capacity, give various gifts like a drink, food, tāmbūla, water and gold also. So also garments, a cow, a (piece of) land, an umbrella, vessels etc. in many ways. So also fruits and grants of land. No doubt should be had in this matter. O brāhmaṇa, I shall describe to you the characteristics of holy places. (These are) the holy places: This Gaṅgā that appears (here), holy Sarasvatī, Revā and Yamunā, the river Tāpī, so also Carmaṇvatī, and excellent Sarayū, Veṇī, and Pūraṇā, the destroyer of sins. Other are: Kāverī, Kapilā and Viśalyā, Viśvatāriṇī, (the river) known as Godāvarī, Tuṅgabhadrā and Gaṇḍakī. The river Bhīmarathī is said always to cause fear to sins. Devikā and Kṛṣṇagaṅgā, and other excellent rivers—these become, in many ways, the holy places on auspicious occasions. Rivers, whether they are in a village or in a forest, are everywhere purifying. Rites like a bath, giving gifts should be done there only. O brāhmaṇa, when the name of a holy place is not known, then these words should be uttered: 'This is a great holy place of Viṣṇu'.

69-73a. There is no doubt that everywhere the (presiding) deity of a holy place is Viṣṇu. One who wants to secure (salvation) should remember the name 'Nārāyaṇa' at the holy places. The proper fruit of the holy place is produced merely by Viṣṇu's name. There is no doubt that a man should give Viṣṇu's name to those holy places and deities which are not known. All sanctifications are auspicious. An ocean, lakes like Mānasa, springs, small pools etc., so also all small rivers become holy places due to the name of Viṣṇu (being given to them). The mountains are of the nature of holy places, so also a sacrifice and the sacrificial ground.

73b-81. That (place) where learned brāhmaṇas have remained with eagerness, is alone said to be a very great holy place, removing all sins. Śrāddha, the place where a śrāddha is offered, a temple, a sacrificial ground, the place where the proper sound

of (the recital of) Vedas (is heard), where auspicious tales about Viṣṇu (are narrated), one's own house endowed with religious merit, so also the holy place of cows, a forest where there is the Aśvattha tree, a place where there is a sanctifying dwelling—all these and others are holy places, so also one's mother and father. There is no doubt that that place where (food) is cooked for moral merit, where the teacher himself stays, where there is a chaste wife, is a holy place. That is his holy place set up for his liberation, where his son, learned and interested in piety (lives). These and others are the holy places, so also the king's palace. It is certain that at these and other holy places, nobody among all the human beings would obtain anything, anytime, without propitiating Viṣṇu, the giver of everything. Children, wealth, wife, a high mansion, horses, elephants, pleasures, heaven and salvation are not away (from a man) by means of devotion (i.e. when he is devoted) to Viṣṇu.

82-89a. Nārāyaṇa is the highest god; he, Janārdana, is of the nature of truth. That highest lord, dividing himself into three parts, created (everything). The lord became united with Rajas (i.e. activity) and Tamas (i.e. darkness or ignorance). The lord had Rajas and Sattva (i.e. goodness) more (than Tamas). In the lotus in his navel he created Brahmā. The lord created Rudra possessed of Rajas and Tamas. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas (together) are said to be the Trinity. Due to Sattva a being is freed. Sattva is of the form of Viṣṇu. A man with Rajas joined with Sattva would be rich and superior due to glory. That which practises the rites by alluding to the Vedic words is known as Rudra (and) is said to be distinctive of men. Due to that a man would be a king in the world, and again due to Rajas and Tamas. Those practices which are bereft of Rajas (i.e. activity) and are only Tāmasa (i.e. done through ignorance), give (i.e. lead) men (to) a difficult situation in this world and in the next world. He who is Viṣṇu, is himself Brahmā, and he who is Brahmā is himself Śiva. In the sacrifice all the three gods are present. Worship should daily be offered to the (three) gods.

89b-101. O best brāhmaṇa, he who differentiates among these three, is a sinner, is of a sinful mind, and would have an undesirable mode of existence. O brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu alone is the highest Brahman. Viṣṇu alone is the world. This month of

Vaiśākha is said to be dear to him in (i.e. for) all rites, and gives the fruit of the great sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice. It is excellent for a bath at a holy place, penance, giving (gifts), muttering prayers and sacrifices. O brāhmaṇa, those who, when the Sun has entered Aries, continuously bathe at daybreak in a river, and worship (him) at a holy place, do not get punishment from me. Again and again killing the stream of sins before me, again and again destroying the writing of Citragupta, again and again bathing in the month of Vaiśākha, men emancipate their ancestors from sins. This great secret cuts off fear. Therefore, it is not disclosed. It is the cause of expulsion from the abode of hell and the cause of the end of my authority. Bhāgīrathī, Narmadā, and Yamunā and Sarasvatī, Viśokā and Vitastā are to the north of the Vindhya (mountain). Godāvarī, Bhīmarathī, Tuṅgabhadrā and Devikā, Tāpī and Payoṣṇī are said to be to the south of Vindhya. He who would duly bathe in the morning in (any) river, has plunged into these twelve rivers. All rivers are holy; all excellent mountains are holy; all abodes (of deities) are holy; and resting places in the forests are holy. They are seen to have been plunged into by him, saluted by him, and very much resorted to by him, who, being controlled, would bathe in Vaiśākha where the Sun has half-risen. O brāhmaṇa, his religious merit cannot be described even if one has thousands of thousands mouths.

102-107. O best brāhmaṇa, it would be possible to describe the fruit of Vaiśākha if one would have a long span of life (given) by Brahmā. As Viṣṇu is the fire dragging (one away) from hell, in the same way the month of Vaiśākha, properly observed, would burn sins (committed during) thousands and hundreds of crores of kalpas, like the sin of a brāhmaṇa's murder, illicit intercourse, sin committed willingly or unwillingly, a secret minor sin, great commingling (of castes), the great sin of loss of caste, so also (giving gift to) an unworthy person, sin causing filth and confusion due to speech, mind and body. He who would worship Viṣṇu in Vaiśākha, would live in Viṣṇu's city.

CHAPTER NINETYEIGHT

The Greatness of Vaiśākha

Sūta said:

1-3. Having heard these words of that Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama), the brāhmaṇa again asked him about the auspicious rite of Vaiśākha.

The brāhmaṇa said:

O magnanimous Dharmarāja, you have properly disclosed the secret of the religious merit due to a bath in Vaiśākha which gives salvation to men, and is great. Tell me the manner in which a man, being calm and having bathed in the morning, should worship the god (Viṣṇu) and with which flowers in the month of Vaiśākha.

Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) said:

4-11a. Of all kinds of leaves Tulasī is dear to Viṣṇu. Holy places like Puṣkara, so also rivers like Gaṅgā and gods like Viṣṇu live in the leaf of Tulasī. Always and at all times Tulasī is dear to Viṣṇu. Leaving the flower of jasmine and abandoning a lotus, and taking a Tulasī leaf a man should devoutly worship Viṣṇu. Even Śeṣa would not be able to describe the fruit of the religious merit due to it. All that—plucking a Tulasī leaf in honour of a deity or for a rite in honour of the dead ancestors without bathing—becomes fruitless. (Such a man) becomes pure by (drinking) the five products of a cow. As yellow myrobalan removes diseases, so Tulasī quickly removes very many sins like poverty and experiencing calamities. A man, a devotee of Viṣṇu, who especially worships Viṣṇu with (leaves of) Tulasī called Kṛṣṇagaurā, would become Viṣṇu. He who, being restrained, would worship (Viṣṇu) the killer of Madhu at three times of the day during the entire month of Vaiśākha, has no rebirth.

11b-17. A man should always worship Viṣṇu even with food etc. if flowers and leaves are not available, or with rice grains or wheat. He should gratify, after bathing in the morning, with proper rites deities, dead ancestors and men along with the mobile and the immobile. He who always would sprinkle profuse

water at the root of the Aśvattha (tree), and would go round it full of all gods, or he who would worship with water god Aśvattha on all sides, has liberated a myriad (members of) his family. There is no doubt about it. All griefs like poverty, misfortune, bad dreams and bad thoughts melt away by gratifying Aśvattha, O dear one. He, the hero, who would worship Aśvattha has gratified his dead ancestors, has worshipped Viṣṇu; he alone has worshipped the Planets. He should touch white flowers, so also śamī (leaves), fire, sandal, Sun's orb and Aśvattha tree, and then should perform the duties of his caste.

18-21a. After scratching (the body of a cow), giving a morsel to a cow, after having bathed and gratified a pippala, and having worshipped Viṣṇu, he would not face misfortune. A woman or a man, though quite weak, who, observing rules already stated, bathes according to her or his capacity in the morning for the three days of Vaiśākha—the thirteenth, the fourteenth (of the bright half) and the full-moon day, gets free from all sins and obtains inexhaustible heaven (i.e. obtains heaven eternally).

21b-26a. If a man, being restrained and pure, gets up on the three nights (i.e. the days, viz. the twelfth, the thirteenth and the full-moon day), and feeds, according to his capacity, ten brāhmaṇas, and, offering white or black sesamum seeds with water to twelve brāhmaṇas, would perform a solemn observance saying 'May Dharmarāja be pleased with me', and would gratify the dead ancestors and gods, (then) the sin committed by him during his life perishes at that moment only. He would happily stay in heaven a myriad after a myriad (years). He, honoured by all deities, would not see me only. O brāhmaṇa, he who, to gratify the dead ancestors and deities, devoutly gives cooked food, jars full of water etc. on the three days, viz. the thirteenth, the fourteenth (days of the bright half) and the full-moon day, is freed from great sins.

26b-28a. He who, every day, would gratify brāhmaṇas with golden vessels full of sesamum seeds and water, destroys (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. The sesamum seeds created by Brahmā should be given on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha with devotion, for the good of the children.

28b-31. In this matter, listen to an old account, O you of a

good vow. The fruit of the month of Vaiśākha is very wonderful (when a gift is given) on the full-moon day (of that month). Thirty days beginning with (the Sun's) passing through Aries are excellent. They are said to be superior to all sacrifices and holy. Especially (holy) are the three days (viz. the thirteenth, fourteenth the full-moon day) which are to be secured with a difficulty by sinners. The full-moon day of Vaiśākha is still more holy and is dear to Viṣṇu. This day is the day of the beginning of the period of the duration of the world called Vārāhakalpa.

32-36a. Formerly on this day Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) killed these two pre-eminent demons—Hiraṇyākṣa and Madhu, and lifted up the earth. This lord performed these three (feats) only on the thirteenth, fourteenth and the full-moon day, in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha. Since then, O best brāhmaṇa, due to the speciality, this full-moon day, the beginning of the period of the duration of the world, is called purifying and the proper witness of the feat. O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of the life of him, indeed harming himself, who, controlling himself, has not bathed in the morning in Vaiśākha?

36b-38a. A woman or a man who restraining herself or himself, has, according to proper rites, bathed in the morning on the thirteenth and fourteenth, and especially on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, is freed from all sins. He who has passed the full-moon day of Vaiśākha without bath, gifts, worship, śrāddha, or (other acts of) merit, has indeed hell as his abode.

38b-44a. There is no other sacred treatise like the Veda; there is no other holy place like Gaṅgā; there is no other gift like a cow or water; and there is no other day like the full-moon day of Vaiśākha. He who being solely devoted to Viṣṇu, gives a cow with water (to a brāhmaṇa) on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, is especially the fourth of (i.e. in addition to) the three gods. A man who has killed his mother or father, or who causes abortion, or who violates his teacher's bed (i.e. his wife), gets free from all sins on seeing a cow along with water. Those who, in this earth, give a cow along with water according to the proper rite (to a brāhmaṇa) on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, liberate ten earlier and ten later members of the family. Those who give to the best brāhmaṇas sugar, fruits, tāmbūla, shoes and documents, are declared to be fortunate in this world. He who gives jars with gems and water, cooked food, and golden presents on the full-

moon day of Vaiśākha, would obtain the fruit of a horse-sacrifice.

44b-49a. Here also they relate an old account, and the conversation of a brāhmaṇa with ghosts in a great forest. O sinless one, formerly there lived a brāhmaṇa Dhanaśarman by name. When he had gone to the forest for (collecting) kuśa, he saw a wonder. He who was frightened, saw three wicked and very awful ghosts whose hair was raised, whose eyes were red, whose teeth were black, who were emaciated, who were making various sounds, and were running here and there. Seeing them, the brāhmaṇa, afflicted with fear, speedily ran away. They too, crying, went after him at that time. Being overpowered by the ghosts, he spoke sweet words (to them).

Dhanaśarman said:

49b-53. Who are you? Due to what have you been reduced to this condition suitable for hell? Please protect me, afflicted with fear, fit to be pitied, afflicted, a devotee of Viṣṇu, very much frightened, a poor brāhmaṇa who has come to the forest. That Viṣṇu, the lord, Brahmaṇya, Keśava pleased with you through compassion towards me, will give you felicity. That Viṣṇu is like the hemp-flower, has put on a yellow garment, and by merely hearing his name great darkness goes (away). The god is without origin and death, holds a conch, a disc and a mace. He is endless; his eyes are like lotuses; he gives salvation to the dead.

Yama said:

54-55. The goblins were pleased by merely hearing the name of Viṣṇu. They lived in religious merit. They were controlled by compassion and generosity. They were pleased by his words and were impelled by his direction. The goblins, afflicted with the flood of hunger and thirst, said these (words) to the brāhmaṇa:

The goblins said:

56-64. O brāhmaṇa, on seeing you and on hearing the name of Viṣṇu, we have reached another condition. We have become kind. Indeed the union with the good removes sin, and joins (a man) with virtue, and quickly spreads fame. Whom does the

moonlight of the nectar of a devotee of Viṣṇu, which is full of the elixir of life, and which gives great delight, not give joy? This is named Kṛtaghna. This second one is Vidaivata. This third one is Avaiśākha, who is the (most) sinful of the three. This sinful one always practised ingratitude. Therefore, his name is fixed as Kṛtaghna due to his (ungrateful) actions. This Kṛtaghna was a śūdra named Sudāsa in the former existence. Due to that sin (of ingratitude) he has reached this condition. There is an expiation for a very great sinner, a rogue, or for one who acts malevolently to his teacher or master; but there is no expiation for an ungrateful person. O brāhmaṇa, having experienced (i.e. lived in) groups of many hells with bodies enduring torments, he has come to this stage. Without worshipping the deities, so also without giving to the teacher and brāhmaṇas, he ate food all alone. Therefore, he is (called) Vidaivata.

65-76a. This one known by the name Harivīra in the former existence, was the king of ten thousand villages. Through anger, egotism and atheism, he was always bent upon violating his teacher's orders. He who censured brāhmaṇas, ate without offering the (five) great sacrifices. Due to that sinful act, he, having experienced the great peril of hell, was then born as a ghost called Vidaivata. I am the third one, Avaiśākha by name. I am (most) sinful of the Gautama family, known by the same name. I lived in Viprovāsapura, and was a sacrificer in the former existence. I who follow the path as laid down in the Vedic texts, did not bathe in honour of Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha. I did not give (any gift), or did not offer any oblation, especially on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha. During that month I did not worship (Viṣṇu) the killer of (the demon) Madhu. Nor did I please the learned men. I also did not gratify dead ancestors and deities with the gifts of jars containing water; and I did not offer sesamum seeds with water to learned brāhmaṇas. In that month I did not honour, in order to gratify the dead ancestors and deities with flowers, fruits, tāmbūla, sandal, fans and garments. Not a single full-moon day of Vaiśākha, giving complete fruit, did I (even) observe by good deeds like a bath, giving gifts or worshipping (Viṣṇu). Therefore, all my deeds done according to the Vedic texts have become fruitless. Then I totally became

a ghost named Avaiśākha. I have fully told you this cause of (the turning into ghosts of) all the three of us.

76b-80. (Please) be our emancipator from (our) sin, since you are a restrained brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, brāhmaṇas, auspicious due to having done good deeds, are superior to holy places. They liberate great sinners even though they have resorted to (i.e. fallen into) hells. Between the two, viz. the man who always bathes at the holy places like Gaṅgā and the man who keeps the company of the good—he who has the company of the good, is better. Or, you who are exerting for us, (please) go to my son, well-known as Dhanaśarman, and inform him, O lord. He, who exerts when some work of others has come up, obtains much more fruit than obtained by sacrifices or giving gifts.

Yama said:

81-82a. Having heard those words of the ghost, Dhanaśarman was extremely pained. Having recognised him to be his father, fallen into hell, he entirely censured himself, and said these words.

Dhanaśarman said:

82b-87. O lord, I am the useless son of you—of Gautama. That son who would not carefully liberate his father, would not purify himself, or being rich, would not give (gifts, is useless). Even an intelligent person has to note carefully that religious merit s difficult (to understand), as you who are my father, have reached this misfortune. You have not secured continuous happiness from me. He, due to whom continuous happiness is obtained in both worlds is called a son due to that. According to law, a man has two teachers in this world—his father and his mother. Of the two also, the father is superior as his superiority due to his (depositing the) seed is seen. What should I do? Where should I go? O father, how (i.e. what would be) your condition? I do not know the true nature of propriety. I depend upon your words.

The ghost said:

88-96. O son, listen to my true words. Due to the force of future interest, I shall have bliss as a result of some religious

merit. I who was performing the rites as laid down in the scriptures arrogantly, dishonoured the words of my teacher; (and thus) I insulted my teacher. Due to the teacher's insult, and the man's great delight, anger or pride, the religious merit perishes, like glory due to bad conduct. A rite which is not against the Vedic rites (should be performed) according to the rules laid down in the Purāṇas. (But) through ignorance I performed only the Vedic rites. O son, I never duly observed even a single full-moon day of Vaiśākha, which is a flame like that of the wild fire for the fuel of sins, and an axe for the tree of sins. That man who does not observe the vow of the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, would be Avaiśākha. After that for ten existences he is born in the stocks of animals. Then in course of time he would become a ghost in the end. He somehow gets the human existence which is hard to get. I shall tell you a great means which brings about the liberation of a ghost; I had heard this in my former existence from the mouth of my own teacher. O son, go home and bathe duly in Yamunā. That full-moon day of Vaiśākha, the beginning of kalpa, and the giver of all good conditions, has come today. The full-moon day is beneficial for the worship of the dead ancestors and the deities in the later part of the day. A man should devoutly give on this day even water mixed with sesamum seeds, with water jars and food, to the dead ancestors.

97-103. That śrāddha offered here (i.e. on this day) lasts for a thousand years. He who feeds brāhmaṇas on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, has his dead ancestors satisfied with each ball of rice for a life time. Having duly bathed on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, one should feed ten brāhmaṇas with milk. There is no doubt that by (doing) that he gets freed from all sins. Having given white or black sesamum seeds along with water, he should invoke their blessings. Saying, 'May Dharmarāja be pleased', he should gratify his dead ancestors and deities. Just at that moment only the sin that he has committed throughout his life, perishes. The sesamum seeds created by Brahmā should be offered (to a brāhmaṇa) with devotion on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha and should be applied to the entire body, O brāhmaṇa. To him who bathes with sesamum seeds mixed with barley grains (applied) to the entire body, O brāhmaṇa, Brahmā gives a desired boon, so also does Dharma.

104-114. He who gives, to please Dharmarāja, water-jars, there is no doubt that he has liberated seven (members before) him and seven (after him of his family). O son, give us that fruit which is produced by devoutly bathing, muttering (prayers), offering oblations, giving gifts and worshipping (Viṣṇu) on the thirteenth, the fourteenth and on the full-moon day (of Vaiśākha). Abandoning these two ghosts I shall resort to a position in the heaven; for, the end of the sin of these two has also come by.

Yama said:

Saying 'All right' he left. Then the brāhmaṇa took a bath and gave gifts very much devoutly on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha. Having devoutly bathed and being very much pleased, he, when the full-moon day of Vaiśākha arrived, gave many gifts and gave them separately for his religious merit. Just at that moment only, they, seated in an aeroplane, went to heaven. O best brāhmaṇa, they were pleased with his having given his religious merit to them. The best brāhmaṇa Dhanaśarman also, who knew the sacred texts, the law-codes and the Purāṇas enjoyed many pleasures for a long time and obtained Brahmā's heaven. Therefore, with great regard (for you), I describe in brief this most meritorious full-moon day of Vaiśākha, which purifies all. Those men who, of a pure heart, bathe duly in the morning in the month of Vaiśākha, and worship (Viṣṇu) the destroyer of Madhu, are alone fortunate, blessed and they alone are born in the world as men having a purpose. The man who, having bathed in the morning, worships (Viṣṇu) the lord of Ramā (i.e. Lakṣmī), and is endowed with (i.e. observes) all controls and restraints, indeed destroys his sin.

115-128. Those who, being controlled, bathe in the month of Vaiśākha have alone overcome death; are alone fortunate among men; they alone are free from sins; they alone do not enter (a mother's) womb (i.e. are not reborn). That month of Vaiśākha, even a small meritorious act alone in which would be equal to (merit done in) a day of Brahmā, roars with sacrifices and austerities and giving of gifts. Even the quality of viciousness of a man who bathes and worships Viṣṇu at sunrise in the month

of Vaiśākha, tends to make his body pure due to his contact with a drop of water. Till that Virāṭ, Viṣṇu, the dear lord of Ramā (i.e. Lakṣmī) does not arrive, sins, having got upon a man's body move there. The steps which a man puts for going to a holy place in the month of Vaiśākha, again become equal to horse-sacrifices, due to recollection of Śrī Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu) and by reciting his name. The month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu, burns, when a (daily) bath is taken during it, many grave sins like (the mountains) Meru and Mandara. O brāhmaṇa, to favour you, I have, in brief, told you this greatness of the month of Vaiśākha, which destroys the sins of the listener. He too, who will devoutly listen to this account narrated by me, will be free from sins and will not see me. The many sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa committed (by a man), definitely perish by performing the rites (narrated above) in Vaiśākha. A man who has duly bathed during Vaiśākha would liberate thirty former, thirty later dead ancestors, so also thirty far and near ancestors. On one side are all holy places and sacrifices with presents, and on the other side is the month of Vaiśākha (in) which (the vows are) properly observed. Since this month of Vaiśākha is very dear to that lord Viṣṇu of excellent deeds, it is superior to all (sacrifice etc.). O lord of the earth, having got what I told about the month of Vaiśākha, do not entertain any doubt whatsoever. In this matter listen to a wonderful, old account. Though the account should not be told (to anyone), I shall tell it to you.

CHAPTER NINETYNINE

Kaśyapa's Advice to King Mahīratha

Yama said:

1-7. Formerly there was a well-known king named Mahīratha who had obtained great power and wealth due to his former religious merit. He merely confined himself to amorous play with his wife who subjected him to lust. He was addicted

to that vice only, and was not settled in piety. Having transferred (the administration of) his kingdom to his minister, the king enjoyed the objects of senses. He, moving in the company of beautiful women, and averse to royal offices, did not consider (i.e. care for) his subjects, wealth, religious rites, material welfare and (other) acts. He only had desire for the amorous play with beautiful women. After a long time his family priest, Kaśyapa, thinking in his mind that a preceptor who, through folly, does not ward off the king should be known as a sharer in the sin, spoke righteous words to him. (He also thought:) 'If he disregards the words of the family priest though admonished by him, then the family priest is not at fault. The king shares the entire fault':

8-13. "O listen, O king, listen to the words of me—your teacher—which are accompanied with piety and substance, which are unbroken (i.e. clear) in meaning, which are significant and are free from (selfish) desire and passion. This alone is a great religious merit to live in (i.e. abide by) the words of the preceptor. A small order of the teacher (if followed) increases the life, wealth and happiness of kings. You have not gratified brāhmaṇas with gifts; you have not worshipped Viṣṇu. You have not observed any vow; you have not practised any penance; you have not visited a holy place. You who were under the influence of lust, did not think of Viṣṇu's name. Oh! due to the company of cowards you did not keep contact of the learned. To whom are beloveds, carrying the chowries of Cupid, not dear? But they are fickle like the leaves of kadalī due to violently moving wind. Men of large hearts are not satisfied with things unsteady like ripples, pleasures transitory like the knittings of eyebrows, and youth that is drunk (i.e. enjoyed) for a short time.

14-17a. What is the use of knowledge, penance, sacrifice, political wisdom, or what is the use of a discriminating mind to him whose heart is taken away by women? Religious merit alone is the friend that follows (a man) after (his) death. All else perishes along with the body. (A man) should collect religious merit gradually, as the ants put up an anthill. With religious merit as his companion, he crosses darkness difficult to cross.

17b-19a. O best of kings, do you not know the flurry of men's life which is unsteady like the violent billows on water sent up by wind? What is the use of senseless ornaments to them who have politeness as their jewelled crown, truth and piety as the ear-rings and sacrifice as the bracelet? The kinsmen leave the dead body on the ground like (a piece of) wood or a clod and turn away.

19b-26. Religious merit (alone) goes after him (i.e. the dead man). Why do you not get up and run, when all (your relatives) are going away, your (span of) life is decreasing and your existence is being cut off? The family, the sons, the wife etc., the body, collection of wealth belong to others and are uncertain. Good or bad deeds alone are yours. When, leaving everything, you who are helpless, should go, why is it that you are attached to worthless objects? Why do you not do your duty? How will you, the dead one (i.e. after death), go all alone along the path in the forest where there is no rest, no support, no provisions for the journey and without a spiritual teacher? Nobody will go after you who have started (along the path after death). (Only) your good and bad deeds will follow you who will be going. Being careful, resort to the deed which is told by the sacred texts and the codes of law, which is proper for your family and place, which is beneficial; and resort to good conduct based on piety. One should give up worldly prosperity and love of sensual enjoyment if they are bereft of virtue. All pleasures like worldly prosperity and sensual enjoyment are had by means of virtue.

27-29. Day and night one should practise the control of senses and deep abstract meditation, for one whose senses are controlled is able to keep his subjects on the (right) track. Wealth which is very fickle like glances of a very bold woman lives with kings for a long time through discipline due to great effort. (But) the wealth of those who are given to lust and pride, who do things thoughtlessly, and who are fools, perish along with their life.

30-36. Large-hearted persons do not dance (with joy) due to prosperity which is (first) seen and which (later) disappears. An ocean does not increase in size due to rivers that come or go. Between an evil habit and death, evil habit is said to be trouble-

some, for the addicts to a bad habit go down and down, while a king who is not addicted to a bad habit, goes to heaven. Vices, especially due to lust are difficult to end. Give up this lust which is hostile to piety. There are also the kingdoms of the foolish, thoughtless demons of bad conduct, which are enjoyed due to their luck. Those accompanied by sins, are not stable in this world. They vanish as fuel does due to the contact of fire. He whose heart, while he walks, stands, is awake or sleeps, is not given to thought is certainly dead. Since a teacher is said to be the adviser of the learned those near whom stand calamities, should hold on their head (i.e. should honour) words of advice.

37-41. A wise man accomplishes his objects after giving up the fever of the (addiction to) objects of senses by means of his mind which is in equilibrium, which is steady, and through a practical scheme. The mind of beings like a child, (though) taken (away) from foul things goes to good things and (again) from them to the other (i.e. foul things); therefore one should drive it (away) with force. A king, accepting the opinion of the old who see (i.e. know) the righteous conduct, should control one's mind going astray. Riches do not help, nor friends, nor kinsmen; the movement of hands and feet (does not help); going to another country (does not help); freedom from bodily suffering (does not help); so also resorting to holy places. One can get the highest position by muttering (prayers) with mind devoted to Him.

42-46. Therefore, a wise man should certainly strive to control the mind remaining in the objects of senses, as the driver (of a chariot) controls the horses. O king, you, being restrained, should do that of which you are deprived, and (which was done) by devotees getting the respective fruits. Therefore, also listen now. A man who is erring should ask (i.e. consult) his wise friends. It is proper to do what they would say when asked. He who desires bliss, should, by all means, curb his lust and anger, since they are bent upon harming his bliss. O king, lust is a great, powerful enemy residing in the body. A man who longs for bliss should not go under its sway.

47-50a. This Cupid (i.e. lust) was formerly burnt with the fire from his forehead by the trident-holder, god of gods (i.e. Śiva), and was rendered bodiless. Such was the situation. When this mind-born one desires to strike a woman, he resorts to the

body of men, and manifests his nature. He maddens a man by invisibly resorting to his body when he again and again thinks of the form of a woman. In the same way he also maddens the body of a woman. There is no doubt about it.

50b-69a. Therefore, O king, his name has come to be *Smara*, due to his being remembered (i.e. thought of). O hero, he has any colour. He would resort to (i.e. put on) any garment. Due to the light of his lustre he would go to a condition free from the stream of tears being drunk. Having taken up the form of a woman he would delude even a courageous man, and having resorted to (the body of) a man he would cause a woman to melt. O king, he is but natural; (though) bodiless is present in a body. How is (then) sin done in the case of the body? Who is more impure than him by reaching whom the pure products of a cow and the oblations become impure (just) in a moment. The (people in) this world, smelling their own foul odour, seeing their own feces, troubling their own noses, do not get disgusted. Who is more impure than him reaching whom agreeable food, fragrant food and drinks become impure? Food, reaching his belly would give up its nature; its impurity mixed with insects is quickly realised. Yet, O king, in the body he gives up his own nature, and goes to a dog's condition in the body full of the foul smell of insects. There is no doubt that lice or insects are produced there. That insect causes bursting; and there is an awful itching. It would create agony; and would shake the entire body. That scratching rubbed by the tips of the nails is allayed. Like that is the pleasure of a sexual union. There is no doubt. Thus a man enjoys pleasures. He also drinks (i.e. eats) good eatables. The fire (in the body) digests (the food) that is there, and would drop the feces at the anus. The fluid there that has become strong, becomes excessive. Being pure, and of a pure vigour he goes to the place of Brahmā. The vigour does not obtain a seat, and remains unsteady. He is dragged by samāna (i.e. vital air having its seat in the cavity of the navel and essential for digestion); and is carried by that air. In the skull of beings there are five insects. These two are at the root of the ear. Then there are in the seat of the eyes; O king, they are of the size of the small finger. They are red-tailed. The black-tailed have the colour of fresh butter. There is no doubt about this.

Well-being to you, hear their names from me who am telling them. The two insects *Piṅgalī* and *Śṛṅgalī* are at the root of the ear. The other two, *Śṛṅgalī* and *Jaṅgalī*, remain in the interior of the eyes. There is no doubt that there are a hundred and fifty insects like that. All remain in the forehead and are of the size of a mustard. There is no doubt that all suffering from skull-disease get disturbed.

69b-77. I shall (now) tell about another great insect *Prājāpatya*. It has the size of a rice-grain and its colour. There is no doubt about it. O king, listen, there is a couple of hair in his mouth. The intelligence of beings is perishable at that moment only. There is no doubt about it. That vigour falls in the form of a fluid into the mouth of that Prājāpatya remaining in its own seat. There is no doubt about this. It happily drinks that vigour (i.e. that fluid) and becomes intoxicated due to that. Breaking the place of palate only, it remains unsteadily. The arteries (called) *Iḍā*, *Piṅgalā* and *Suṣumnā* are stationed there. By its own power the artery is shaken for a moment. (Then) O king, there is the itching for sex in all beings. The penis of the man expands, so also the vulva of the woman. The woman and the man, getting mad, are then united. Due to rubbing of one body with another, there is a momentary pleasure. Then there is the same kind of itching. O hero, such a feeling is indeed seen everywhere. This consequence of the (enjoyment of the) objects of senses is unpleasant.

78-82a. Virtue alone, practised duly is better. Resorting to firmness then, practise virtue alone. This is the unsteady breath which, in a moment, has hundreds of goings and comings. The life of men is dependent on it. Who causes delay in (the practice of) virtue? Oh! the heart of a man who has reached even a hundred (years) would not keep away from the prohibited senses of objects. Sexual desire can never be pacified by enjoying senses of objects. Like fire with oblation it again enhances.

82b-93. Who else, but the soul-lord Rāma—the lord Viṣṇu, is able to free the mind taken away by an unchaste woman? Therefore, due to the foulness of lust everything becomes fruitless. You have age (i.e. you are young) even now. Practise what is beneficial to you. On one side are all virtuous deeds causing the destruction of the sins of sinners, and on the other side,

there is always the month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu. Murder of a brāhmaṇa, drinking liquor, stealing, cohabiting with one's teacher's wife are declared to be great sins by best sages. The month of Vaiśākha would destroy all the great darkness of sins committed by men through mind and body by means of a vow; as the sun would totally destroy darkness, in the same way the month of Mādhava would remove (sins). Duly practise (the vows) in that month. O king, having abandoned, due to the powerful religious acts performed in the month of Vaiśākha, the great, awful sins committed from birth, men, being delighted reach the city of Viṣṇu. Even sinners, if they practise (vows during) even one Vaiśākha with devotion, go to Viṣṇu's abode. Therefore, O king, you too, bathing (every) morning, duly worship (Viṣṇu), the enemy of (the demon) Madhu, during this month of Vaiśākha. As the cover of a rice-grain or the blackness of copper go away due to the act (of pounding or rubbing), in the same way, O hero, the sin of a man goes away (by means of a rite). Like (the cover of) a rice-grain, the natural impurity of a man is abundant. There is no doubt that it perishes. Therefore, do a bright deed."

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED

Carnal Enjoyment Is Sinful

The king said:

1-4. I have been advised by you with words that are like the water of the milky sea, that have a viewpoint that is cool and pure, that are true and beautiful. O dear one, you have made me drink the nectar which has not come up from the ocean, which is not a substance, which is a medicine for the calamity, and which removes the disease in the form of the worldly existence. O brāhmaṇa, it is said that contact of the good gives delight to men, removes their sins, is a medicine for their life, and destroys old age and death. Due to the association of the good only, those desired objects difficult to obtain, are obtained.

5-11a. For him, who has bathed with (i.e. in the water of) Gaṅgā in the form of the company of the good, which removes sins, what is the use of (giving) gifts, (visiting) holy places, (practising) austerities and sacrifices? The good who know the ways of the world, who are tranquil, are the final emancipation for men who sink and come up in the ocean of the worldly existence, are a strong boat for those who sink in the water (of the mundane existence). O lord, that my feeling desiring the happiness through lust only which was formerly there, has been reversed due to your sight and your words. One would lose a thousand existences for the happiness in one existence. A wise man collects the (fruit of) thousands of existences by means of (i.e. in) one existence. Oh! O brāhmaṇa, by me, a fool, whose heart was longing for carnal pleasures, my own good has not at all been done. Oh! (great was) the delusion of my mind due to which I threw my soul into an awful calamity, ending in misery and difficult to overcome. O holy one, I am pleased (as) I have been roused by your words.

11b-14. Please liberate me by giving me advice. Since you advised me due to my former meritorious deeds, I am (now) especially purified with the dust of your feet. O best among speakers, describe to me the rite of the month of Vaiśākha, which you have said to be removing all sins. O brāhmaṇa sage, for my emancipation from the sins (please) tell me: What are the gifts in that month? What (kind of) bath is prescribed? Who is the deity? Which are the rules?

Yama said:

15. O brāhmaṇa, that glorious Kaśyapa, the treasure of compassion, who was thus addressed, said words which were meritorious, auspicious and beneficial to all.

Kaśyapa said :

16-19. A wise man has to explain to you what is asked with a mind capable of putting together the earlier and later (ideas), and not to mean person of a wicked mind. There is no doubt that by giving in that way a good (i.e. proper) opinion to him who is engaged in sinful activities, the proper

fruit of giving knowledge is obtained. One should not speak to anyone when not asked; so also to him who is asking unjustly. A wise man, even though he knows (the truth), should behave towards the people like a dumb man. (But) he should speak to his learned disciples and sons, though he is not asked. The good of those who have faith is (always) superior.

20-28a. O king, due to my words and due to certain religious merit you had acquired before, now you have become one of a pure heart. Your body having a sinful condition has now gone due to (your) having resorted to me. Due to your having heard the knowledge of religious merit, it has (now) become one having a meritorious condition. A body is of a sinful condition; it is known as unrighteous and is without knowledge. The other which is of (i.e. practises) good vows should be known as righteous. The third one intended for enjoyment of religious merit, and suffering (fruit of) impiety is beyond the senses. Thus those who know religious merit say that the body is of three kinds. As there is the enjoyment of the good deeds and there is salvation, it is of three kinds. The body of a sinful condition is called sinful. Now, the body of you who are having devotion to your teacher, who are following my words (of advice), and who are hearing the nature of religious merit, has become of the nature of religious merit. By that only spotless purity, proper for religious rites, has been produced. Due to luck the minds and acts of bodies of men undergo a change from time to time. Now indeed your body moves on to piety. Therefore, I am inviting you to the excellent bath in the month of Vaiśākha.

Yama said:

28b-32. Then that family priest Kaśyapa urged the king to bathe, (give) gifts, worship (Viṣṇu), and perform proper rites, as formerly told in the sacred texts, in the month of Vaiśākha. The sage spoke to the king as told (in the holy texts). He made him hear the essence of (Viṣṇu's) hymn, and taught him Viṣṇu's worship, having heard and studied which he would obtain the proper fruit. He made him (a man of) pure devotion. The king also performed (the rites) according to the rules. The performance (of rites) in the month of Vaiśākha is praiseworthy. He listened to it with respect.

33-39. The best king devoutly performed morning bath, (got) water for washing the feet with, (offered) oblations and worshipped Viṣṇu. He also made an offering of eatables (to Viṣṇu). That best brāhmaṇa who gives gifts according to the rules and with respect, and who performs the rite like this, who devoutly, every day and every year does like this, goes to the abode of Viṣṇu. Then in other months he again becomes one sporting with the breasts of beautiful women, and has the only desire of enjoyment, according to his liking. He being under the influence of lust, does not follow the rule of piety nor does he consider the royal affairs, except in the month of Vaiśākha. O best brāhmaṇa, even for the great, this mind-born (one), born with the body, is difficult to resist. The course of desires is beginningless, since the women who are endowed with (beautiful) hair and collyrium, whose touch is bad, who are dear to the eyes, who have flames like those of fire, burn a man like grass (i.e. hay). Carnal desire is an awful enemy duly living in the bodies of men. It is full of the smoke of delusion, is sinful. Whom has he (i.e. it) not blinded?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ONE

King Mahīratha Goes to Viṣṇu's Abode

Yama said:

1-7. Then the king, observed by the glance of Death, and with his body emaciated due to consumption caused by extreme sexual enjoyment, died. He was being taken by the attendants of Yama, was repeatedly being beaten, was wailing with loud cries, and remembered his sins. Then Viṣṇu's messengers, having come, beat my followers, and saying, 'He is righteous', they put him into an aeroplane. The king, with his sins exhausted due to the morning bath in the month of Vaiśākha, and being praised by the hosts of celestial nymphs, was taken to Viṣṇu's city. Then, thinking that he was unrighteous, the king was again put by the divine messengers at the behest of Viṣṇu, not far from the

path to hell. While going, he heard the various wailings of beings, being roasted in hell. Hearing the very awful cries of the sinners being boiled, the king was amazed and became extremely afflicted.

8. He said: "O messengers, what is this awful wailing that is heard and is not heard again. Please tell me the reason of it."

The messengers said:

9-17. Beings who have abandoned bounds of morality, who are sinful, and who are bereft of (good) behaviour are thrown into awful hells like Tāmisra. Those who have committed sins here (i.e. in this world), after death resort to the path of (the abode of) Yama, suffer very terrible grief. Being dragged by fierce men of Yama, and fallen into darkness, they are eaten up by very awful dogs, foxes, carnivorous animals, crows, herons, cranes etc. and by wolves and tigers having fire-like mouths and by serpents, scorpions etc. Being burnt by fire, being pricked by thorns, being cut off by saws, being troubled by thirst, and being oppressed by hunger, so also by awful hosts of diseases, fainting at every step due to the odour of pus and blood, they are at times boiled in oils, at times beaten with pestles, are roasted in iron-vessels or at times on stones. At times they eat what is vomitted; at times (they eat) pus and blood. At times they eat feces; at times awful flesh at places with a foul smell. At times they are eaten by insects with fire-like mouths.

18-24. They, wailing in various tones, are again and again roasted in houses where, in the heaps of hair, blood, flesh, marrow and bones, the dead bodies are scattered in a disorderly manner and are clearly eaten by insects, which (houses) are destroyed by the mouths of crows, herons and great vultures and have crores of bodies put very closely without interstices, which have saws and small flat stones for grinding and have no oil, which are made of trees with sharp thorns, and have the pillars of iron, oil and marrow, which are bright with pillars with fierce flames and razors, thorns and nails, which are full with the hot pus of Vaitaraṇī, and the breasts of men and women cut off with swords, and which are awful on account of being seized with fearful darkness. They have nooses tied round their necks; at

places they are surrounded by serpents; at places they are squeezed by machines, and at places they are dragged with their knees (seized).

25-29. O king, the sinners, doing bad acts, and wailing, with their backs, heads and necks broken, with their throats choked, (appearing) very awful, they with bodies capable of suffering torment, being whirled in an apartment on the top of the house, are troubled. They wail along with the enjoyment of sensual objects. All beings suffer this (due to) what they have done before. The union (that was had) for love with another's wife, gives pain. The enjoyment of objects of senses for a short while, has turned out to be giving pain for many years. O best king, having got the touch of the breezes coming from the body of you who bathed duly in the morning in Vaiśākha, they are delighted for a moment and due to your lustre have become strong. Therefore, they who remain in the hell are free from wailing. Even the name of those who have a meritorious character is said to lead to happiness. The touch of the breezes that had the touch of their bodies causes delight.

Yama said:

30-32a. Hearing these words, the king, the treasure of compassion, said to the messengers of Viṣṇu of wonderful acts: "The heart of the good is indeed soft like fresh butter, which heated with fire, certainly melts."

The king said:

32b-39a. Abandoning an oppressed and unhappy being, I am not able to go. Fie upon him who, though capable, does not remove the affliction of the oppressed. If these beings became happy due to the touch of the breezes that left after touching my body, then you may take me there. As the sandal-trees that remove the torment of others purify sandal, in the same way those men who remove the affliction of others purify their mother, are blessed. Those alone are the good, who, in this world remove the affliction of others, and for whom their life is (as insignificant) as a blade of grass in the matter of removing the affliction of the afflicted. This earth is sustained by those

men who are bent on (doing) good to others. The constant happiness of mind is heaven; it may resemble hell (outwardly). Therefore, the good are always happy with (i.e. due to) the happiness of others. It is better to fall into hell, it is better to die, than having pleasure for a moment except the one that is had by removing the affliction of the afflicted.

The messengers said:

39b-45a. Sinful beings are roasted here in the awful hell. They live by (the fruits of) their own deeds. There is no place for misunderstanding. Those who have, in the other world (i.e. on the earth), not given (gifts), not offered oblations, or (have) not bathed at a holy place, (have) also not obliged (any one), or (have) not done, with devotion, a great meritorious act, (have) not offered sacrifices, (have) not practised penance, (have) not muttered (prayers) with joy, are roasted in awful hells. Those who are of a bad character, whose practices are bad, who are condemned due to their diversions and food, who harm others, who commit sins, who amuse themselves in a bad manner, who cut asunder the hearts of others with words cutting the vitals, so also those who sport with the wives of others, are roasted in a hell. Come on, O king, we shall go to Viṣṇu's abode. It is not proper for a meritorious person like you to stay here hereafter.

The king said:

45b-57. O messengers, if I have done meritorious deeds, then why am I brought along this path leading to hell? Or what is my great religious merit? I, given to carnal pleasures, have not done any meritorious act like that. (Then) how shall I go to the city of Viṣṇu? I have a doubt.

The messengers said:

It is true, you, with your mind influenced by lust, did not do a meritorious act, did not perform sacrifices, did not eat the leftovers of a sacrifice; but, formerly, you, impelled by the words of your teacher, bathed duly in the morning (every day) in the month of Vaiśākha for three years and devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu, the lord of the universe and the killer of (the demon) Madhu. He to whom his devotees are dear, destroys the stream

of major and heinous sins. O lord of men, by means of that, the essence of all religious practices, he being honoured by the hosts of gods, is taken to an auspicious place. Viṣṇu, when worshipped, destroys even major sins. In the same way the month of Vaiśākha is declared (to be destroying sins) by Brahmā. As by a spark of fire a heap of grass (hay) is burnt, in the same way by the (daily) morning bath in Vaiśākha the stream of sins is burnt. As long as a man does not bathe in the morning (every day) in the month of Vaiśākha, even the major sins originate in his body. A man who is engaged in vows as laid down (in sacred texts), is freed from streams of sins due to devotion to Viṣṇu and would go to Viṣṇu's abode. O lord of men, since, formerly you did not do meritorious acts from your birth, you were taken along the path to hell. Now, O lord of the earth, being praised by us and the hosts of gods quickly go by an aeroplane to Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWO

King Mahīratha Gives Part of His Merit to the Sufferers in Hell

Yama said:

1-4. O brāhmaṇa, then the king, the ocean of compassion, afflicted by their grief, spoke politely to Viṣṇu's messengers: "The good ones look upon the protection of the frightened one as the fruit of affluence, nobility of birth and meritorious deeds. If I have some religious merit (to my credit) then, by means of that let these beings, free from their sins, go to heaven. I shall live in their place." Having heard these words of the truthful king, they, thinking of his truthfulness and generosity, said these words to the king:

The messengers said:

5-11. O king, due to this your kind deed and your words, your religious merit, especially the accumulated one, has in-

creased. They know that a bath, gift, muttering, sacrifice, penance, worship of deities etc. which is done in the month of Vaiśākha, gives an inexhaustible fruit. A sacrificer or a donor plays in heaven with the gods in ponds having golden lotuses and at the root of the desire-yielding tree. Being sung by the bevy of divine young beautiful damsels he is delighted. By giving water and food a man obtains the auspicious heaven of Varuṇa. One who gives a cow easily liberates seven (members) of his family. By giving a horse a man goes to the Sun's heaven. A man who imparts knowledge goes to Brahmā's heaven. Similarly by giving gold a man goes to the abode of gods. In the same way, one who gives his daughter (in marriage) goes to Viṣṇu's world. A man who bathes in the month of Vaiśākha, gives gifts after worshipping Viṣṇu, obtains all his desired objects and reaches an immutable place.

12-14. On one side are penance, gifts and rites like sacrifices and extraction of Soma juice, and on the other is the great month of Vaiśākha observed properly. O king, the good deed which you formerly did even on one day of the month of Vaiśākha is more than all gifts. O king, O treasure of compassion, give, through pity, your religious merit of a day to the afflicted ones being roasted in the hell.

15-20. There is no virtue like compassion. There is no penance like compassion. There is no gift like compassion. There is no friend like compassion. A man who gives his religious merit (to others) always gets religious merit a lakh times (more); especially due to pity your religious merit would increase. A man who removes the affliction of afflicted beings, is alone blessed in the world; he should be known as born from a portion of Viṣṇu. Give duly, repeating thrice, the religious merit of your bath, gifts etc.—destroying all sins—which you did on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, to these, by keeping lord Viṣṇu as the witness; by that they would obtain heaven. Śibi, the ocean of fame, gave formerly, through kindness, his flesh for (saving the life of) a pigeon, and the ocean of compassion shines in the heaven.

21. The royal sage Dadhīci also gave the collection of his bones, and obtained glory, the moonlight to the three worlds, and inexhaustible heaven.

22-32. The royal sage Sahasrajit abandoned his dear life for a brāhmaṇa, and he of a great fame went to the best heavens. We think that a man does not get that happiness even in salvation which he gets by offering complete satisfaction to an afflicted being. O king, O wise one, due to this deed you have, employing your courage, become the foremost among donors in the tales (about donors). Seeing (i.e. knowing) your intention, your religious merit, pity and your very firm gift, we also, speaking meritorious things, have made an effort to speak. O king, if you like, then without delay, give your religious merit, burning their torment and affliction, to these.

Thus addressed, the kind one, making the mace-holder (Viṣṇu) the witness, duly gave, repeating thrice, his religious merit to them. All those beings, free from the torments inflicted by Yama, got into an excellent aeroplane, and being delighted and saluting, praising and looking at him, went to heaven, when he gave them the religious merit that he had earned on a day of the month of Vaiśākha. Having accepted the religious merit given by the king, which was earned (just) on a day of the month of Vaiśākha, all of them, freed from hell, got into an aeroplane and went to heaven. This is the wonder. Strange is the host of beings on the earth, and strange in many ways is the devotion arisen in them. In the same way, the path of action is strange; (and) the heap of its powers is strange. He who is being praised by groups of sages, who has got more religious merit due to that particular act, who is being saluted by the attendants of the lord of the world, went to that highest place that cannot be obtained by meditating saints.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THREE

How to Meditate on Kṛṣṇa in Vaiśākha

Yama said:

1-8. O best brāhmaṇa, I have narrated in brief some importance of the month of Vaiśākha, especially of the full-moon day.

He who recites this account dear to Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha, getting purified quickly goes to Viṣṇu's abode and gets delighted (there) for many kalpas. This (description of the) greatness of the month of Vaiśākha, the life of the king and our dialogue are blessed, give fame, long life, are a great means of securing prosperity, lead to heaven, give prosperity, delight, are praiseworthy and destroy sins. Having heard and recited it duly, and delighting the one dear to the mind, there would be (i.e. take place) devotion, due to which there would be the destruction of sins. O brāhmaṇa go, as you desire, from the world of gods. Your kinsmen, having dropped (i.e. put) your body on the ground, are still weeping. Go, as it were, you have just got up from the sleep, before your body is quickly thrown (i.e. put) into fire by your kinsmen that are weeping. By my favour you have heard this path of religious merit. Do it properly. By doing it, you will be united with gods at the (proper) time.

Sūta said:

9-12. The brāhmaṇa, having heard these words of the god, and having saluted the lord of Dharma (i.e. Yama), and with his mind pleased, again fell down on the ground due to the favour of Yama from there; and being attended by his kinsmen, he got up as if he had been asleep. The brāhmaṇa himself performed this rite on the earth year after year, and made men bath in the month of Vaiśākha. On the occasion of the meritorious bath in the month of Vaiśākha, I have told you this dialogue between Yama and the brāhmaṇa.

13-14. To him, the wise one, who would bathe in the month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu, and gives gifts, (performs) sacrifices and good deeds with great devotion, the place of Viṣṇu is not difficult to get. He who with a concentrated mind listens to this greatness, due to the Sun's being in Aries, goes, being freed from all sins, to the highest place of Viṣṇu.

The sages said:

15-18. O Sūta, O very wise Sūta, you, of a very kind heart, have told (us) the greatness of the month of Vaiśākha which

destroys sins. You have (also) told us the restraints which are to be observed, and also the worship, bath (to be done and) gifts (to be given) according to the statements in the sacred texts and the codes of law, so also (you have told us) how Viṣṇu, who destroys sins, is pleased. Now we desire to hear about the meditation that liberates one from the worldly existence, of the magnanimous Kṛṣṇa dear to his hosts of devotees.

Sūta said:

19-20. O sages, all of you (now) listen to (the account) of Kṛṣṇa, the soul of the world, the life of the cows, the cowherds and the cowherdesses, and moving in Vṛndāvana. O brāhmaṇas, once Gautama asked Nārada (about this). I shall tell you about that meditation which he had told him.

Nārada said:

21-25. A man of sharp intellect should always remember the excellent Vṛndāvana which appears forth with the fragrant honey dropping from the host of flowers; which is endowed with beauty, being bent due to the mass of new sprouts of good trees; which is surrounded by creepers charming with blossoming fresh sprouts; which is auspicious. He should think of the desire-yielding tree in it, which (tree) was resounding with the hummings of the wandering bees, which were coming out from their mouths and which were sweet due to their enjoying the honey of the blooming flowers; and also resounding with the birds like pigeons, parrots, sārikās and cuckoos; which was full of (the peacocks) the enemies of serpents, dancing here and there; which was constantly served by breezes carrying the drops from the tossing waves of (Yamunā) the daughter of Kalinda, which (breezes) were dusty due to the mass of pollen from the interiors of full-blown lotuses, which were intent upon tossing about the garments of the women from Vraja with their feeling of sex inflamed; which had shoots and new sprouts, the leaves of which were like emeralds, the buds of which were like the mass of the lustre of pearls, which had many fruits of the colour of lotuses; which was the greatest; which was always served by all the seasons; which gave the desired objects. A cautious, wise man should remember a golden ground which

is bright like the sun risen on the mountain with bright golden peaks; which has lustrous jewelled floor; which is shining with the pollen of flowers: which has six parts under it (i.e. the tree) having a shower of the drops of nectar.

26-51. Thinking of the eight-petalled tawny lotus on the greatest seat for abstract meditation, arranged on that jewelled floor, and bright like the sun, one should think of Mukunda (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) seated comfortably in it; (of Mukunda) (who was) like the mass of clouds of split up collyrium; and who was bright like a fresh blue lotus; whose mass of hair was very glossy, dark, dense and curved; whose crest of the peacocks' tails was bright and charming; who was endowed with the flowers of the divine tree fondled by bees; whose ear ornament was a blooming fresh lotus; who had a bright mark of yellow pigment on the base of the forehead bright with unsteady bees; who had the bright cilli-bow; whose face was charming like the autumnal complete orb of the moon without spot; whose eyes were large like petals of lotuses; whose mirror-like cheeks were brightened with jewelled and bright ear-rings of the shape of crocodiles; whose nose was raised and charming; whose lips were more beautiful than red lead; who had brightened the quarters with his gentle smile resembling the moon, the kunda and the mandāra (flowers); whose charming conch-like neck was bright due to the neck-ornament accomplished with the mass of excellent sprouts and flowers; whose shoulders were adorned with spreading garland of santānaka flowers from which were hanging the intoxicated noisy bees; who was shining with the sun in the form of the Kaustubha gem glittering in the sky in the form of his large bosom shining with a series of garlands; whose raised shoulders were well-marked with the auspicious curl of hair on his bosom; whose hands reaching his knees were large and round; who had a little wavy belly; whose hair (on his belly) resembled a swarm of female bees; who had put on armlets, a line of bracelets, a neck-ornament, a girdle, and anklets fashioned with various jewels; whose slim body was tinged with yellow divine fragrant unguents; who had put on a yellowish garment round his round hips; whose thighs and knees were lovely; whose shanks were round and beautiful; who had censured the lustre of the tortoise by means of the lovely and raised foreparts of his feet; whose

lotus-like feet were beautiful, shining like mirrors of emeralds, bright with excellent nails and having the sheaths of red toes; who was charming as his reddish palms and soles were marked with (signs like those of) fish, goads, cupid's flags, barley-corns, lotuses and diamond-pins; whose body was fashioned with the mass of the essence of beauty; who had censured the beauty of Cupid's body with his loveliness; who made the continuous line of the subdued beings salute him due to the constantly produced divine musical orders discharged by the fingers of his hands moving to and fro over the holes of the flute filled with (the breath from) his lotus-like mouth; who was surrounded by cows whose eyes merged in his lotus-like face, that were stumbling, dull and walking slowly due to the burden of their udders, that had in their mouths sprouts of grass left after they were bitten with the tips of their teeth, and whose creeper-like tails were hanging; who was surrounded by calves maddened with the foamy milk dropping from their steady mouths full of their mothers' udders—the ornaments—from which milk was oozing, and with their pairs of ears raised due to the charming, gentle song, sent out by the flute; who was also surrounded by male and female calves with unsteady plantings of the foreparts of their hoofs-unsteady due to the feeling of confusion as a result of gentle strokes of the new horns on their heads; who was surrounded by large oxen who had disturbed the quarters with their bellowing, weary due to the burden of their humps, and having drunk the nectar of the sound of the flute by the steady cavities of their ears, and with their spreading and large noses raised; who was also surrounded by cowherds who were of similar qualities, character, age, sports and dresses, who were made violent by the sweet-sounding flutes and lutes, who were engaged in singing slowly, and with a high and loud tone, who were delighted in lovely dancing accompanied by singing and instrumental music, due to their unsteady creeper-like arms, whose groups of moving bells tied to the cavities of their fat loins and inside their shanks, were sounding, who were roaming, who were maddened, who had made charming ornaments out of the nails of hyenas; who was surrounded by children who were speaking indistinctly but sweetly; and who was all round served by the rows of the very charming, beautiful cowherdesses whose

braids were big and who walked slowly due to (large) hips, who had a line of hair manifested on the three folds, fragile due to the burden of the heavy breasts, whose body-creepers of that tree of Cupid blossomed by the nectar of the musical instruments like the extremely sweet and lovely flute were adorned with horripilation charming like buds that had shot forth, who continuously had the drops of fatigue resembling the spray on unsteady ripples of that ocean of sexual feeling increased by the laughter, who had unbearable affliction along with tremor spreading over their distressed bodies, all the vital parts of which were crushed by shower of Cupid in the form of his sharp glances from the extremely lovely and gentle bows of cilli (i.e. his eyes), who longed for drinking the nectar of the beauty of his very lovely dress and form, who were the rivers flooded with the water of love, whose lotus-like eyes were gentle and unsteady, who were repeatedly served by a swarm of bees greedy of the honey dripping from the full-blown flowers dropping from their beautiful braids, whose words were faltering and soft due to intoxication caused by intense passion of love, whose buttocks appeared beautiful due to the lustre of the ends of the silken garments which were getting loose due to their knots being untied by the unsteady girdles, who had filled the quarters with anklets inlaid with jewels, due to gentle plantings of their stumbling and charming lotus-like pairs of eyes which were broad and had beautiful eye-lashes, whose ear-rings were bright, whose sprout-like reddish lips were fading due to the torment caused by wind of the longest breath (i.e. sigh), whose lotus-like hands were shining with many presents.

52-56. A man should remember him (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) whose entire body was worshipped by the wreaths of the lotuses hidden in the sheaths of their long, unsteady, blue eyes; who has a body which is the abode of sports, which tastes the honey from the lotus-like faces of those innocent ones, which through love has the row of bees in the form of the damsels of bewitching eyes, which is beautiful; a man should remember outside (the group) of the cowherdesses, the cowherds and the beasts, the host of divinities, desiring riches, and led by Brahmā, Śiva and Indra, and intent on praising him. (A man should remember) on his right side, a host of sages, bent upon (following) the

tradition due to their strong desire for religious merit; behind him, (a man should remember) the chief meditating saints like Sanaka, desiring salvation through abstract meditation; (he should remember) on his left, yakṣas, siddhas, gandharvas, vidyādharas and cāraṇas with their beloveds and with kinnaras, so also the chiefs of celestial nymphs desiring (the fulfilment of) their desires through dancing, singing and sounds of musical instruments, who are white like a conch, the moon and the kunda (flower), who know all the Vedas, whose matted hair is tawny, like streaks of lightning, and remembering me (i.e. Nārada), Brahmā's son who desires spotless devotion to his feet, who has given up the company of any one else, who pleases (the lord) with charming modulations in the seven musical orders and the three gamuts endowed with qualities of various notes, should devoutly think of him.

57. The man, of a sharp and clear intellect, having thus meditated upon the son of Nanda, should again deliberately and devoutly worship him in his own body and outside with splendour. O best brāhmaṇas, I have told you all that was desired by you.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOUR

Dialogue between Śambhu and Rāma

Om, salutation to Śrī Gaṇeśa.

The sages said:

1. O illustrious one, tell us again the wonderful account of Rāma, which is the all-in-all of Rāma's greatness and which gives delight to the devotees.

Sūta said:

2-6a. The wise son of Daśaratha, after having performed the excellent horse-sacrifice, engaged himself in the worldly deeds and in acts laid down in the sacred texts. Śaṅkara, the

magnanimous one, desiring to go to Ayodhyā, lived with Pārvatī on the bank of Sarayū. Great-souled sages like Kaśyapa approached that Śaṅkara, of a universal form, and asked him of unlimited lustre. (They said:) "O best sage, wherefrom have you come with your wife? For what deed have you come with your wife? For what deed have you come here? Which country are you bent on going to?"

Śaṅkara said:

6b-12a. I am a brāhmaṇa named Śambhu and living on Himālaya. I am going to see Rāma; I have a great deed to do. That king interested in listening to the Purāṇas, invites (i.e. has invited) me. You too may come. Rāma will be glad.

Then all the sages and Śambhu went with a desire to see Rāma. Knowing them to have arrived, Vasiṣṭha informed Rāma. Then he with his family-priest (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) quickly came out (to meet them). Offering them materials of worship and water for washing their feet, he honoured all the sages. He who curbed his enemies, took them into the best mansion. Having given a seat to each one of them, the best among the Raghus, honoured the sages, seated them on the seats one by one with words of welcome. Pleasing them with sweet words, he said these words to them who were seated on the seats.

Śrī Rāma said:

12b-15a. Today my existence has become fruitful; today I have obtained the fruit of my penance. Today the time of obtaining the fruit of my practice of the lores has come. Today my dead ancestors are pleased; my kingdom has become fruitful today. My (good) conduct has become fruitful today; today my learning has become fruitful.

To king Rāma, having lotus-like eyes, who was speaking like this, the brāhmaṇas, Kaśyapa and others said:

The sages said:

15b-21. This brāhmaṇa is Śambhu who is conversant with all sacred texts, who knows the essential truth of the Vedas and

the Vedāṅgas, who is engaged in the good of all beings, who lives at Kailāsa, and who is always determined in (practising) penance, who is comparable to Brahmā in divine glory, who is the best of those who know the Vedas, who is comparable to Viṣṇu in his affection for brāhmaṇas, and to Śaṅkara in (showing) grace. Such is (this) very lustrous best brāhmaṇa Śambhu who knows the eighteen Purāṇas and who is well-versed in Mīmāṁsā[1] and Nyāya[2]. Due to your great luck this best sage has come (here). This best sage invited by you, has come from Kailāsa, O lord. Therefore, O you descendant of Raghu, O illustrious one, ask him (about) the excellent account of the Purāṇas. We, desiring to hear (it), have today come (to you). The knowledge of a man who has mastered the Vedas and knows all sacred texts, but has not heard the Purāṇas, is not accurate.

Sūta said:

22. Thus addressed by the sages who had realized the truth, the best of the Raghus, eager to listen to the Purāṇas, got incomparable delight.

Śrī Rāma said:

23-26. O excellent, best sage, I desire to hear from you all that, viz. the varieties of the worship of the Phallus, the greatness of the Phallus, the greatness of the name of the great lord (Śiva), the importance of worship, the significance of salutation, the greatness of wisdom, the importance of offering water, so also of offering incense, O best one, so also of offering lamps, aloewood etc. and the importances of flowers, the account destroying sins

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1. Mīmāṁsā—One of the six systems of Indian Philosophy. It was originally divided into two systems: the Pūrvamīmāṁsā and the Uttaramīmāṁsā. The former is said to be founded by Jaimini. The latter is ascribed to Bādarāyaṇa. The two systems have very little in common between them. The Pūrvamīmāṁsā, concerns itself chiefly with the correct interpretation of the ritualistic part of the Veda and the settlement of doubts in regard to Vedic texts. The Uttaramīmāṁsā, also called Brahmamīmāṁsā, deals mainly with the nature of Brahman or the Supreme Spirit.

2. Nyāya—A system of Indian Philosophy founded by Gautama, also known as Gotama and Akṣapāda. The system is primarily concerned with the conditions of correct thinking and with the means of gaining a true knowledge of reality.

from many tales and traditions, so also the four goals of human life, viz. *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa* and the means of (attaining) them.

Śambhu said:

27-33. O Rāma, Rāma, O you of great (i.e. mighty) arms, O Rāghava, you are meritorious, (since) though attached to (i.e. engaged in the administration of) the kingdom you have a liking for hearing the Purāṇas. O Rāma, it would be due to the service of the great and resorting to holy places. That is the tongue that would sing (the praise of) Śiva; that is the heart which is dedicated to him; those two hands alone that worship him, are fit to be praised. That body alone is best born among all existences which brightens with horripilation at the narration (of the virtues) of Viṣṇu. O great king, you are blessed since your mind has moved in (asking) questions about him.

Immediately thereafter couriers, hurrying and tired, came (there). The best among the Raghus took a letter from the hands of (one of) them, and read it. Rāma thought to his mind: 'How has it taken place?' Śambhu who was in the guise of a brāhmaṇa and accompanied by his wife, then asked Rāma: "O you descendant of Kakutstha, what are you thinking about when the sages are sitting in front of you?" Hearing his words, Rāma said to the best sages:

Śrī Rāma said:

34-41. Oh, how is it that Bibhīṣaṇa seeing the Phallus of Śiva, (called) Rāmeśvara and installed by me, is bound with chains by the crooked, wicked-minded Drāviḍas? Think about it with your (i.e. by applying your) mind.

Thinking (about it) the best sages were unable to know (it even) a little. They said to Rāma: "We do not know." Then Rāma said: "O best ones, having duly seen (i.e. looked into) a Purāṇa tell (me) all that. After that the cause of your ignorance may be considered. Which Purāṇa should be looked into; similarly which should be avoided; which verse is excellent; which is other than that; what kind of worshipper should be there and

for what kind of act; and on seeing (its) verdict (*obscure!*) as to how the worship should be done by devotees." Hearing these words of Rāma, those best brāhmaṇas spoke to Rāma whose mind was full of anxiety: "O Rāma, we shall not tell it. One who knows the Purāṇa, should look into it." Hearing that, Rāma, full of modesty, asked Śambhu; he too, who was very intelligent, hearing those words, said:

Śambhu said:

42-50a. A very intelligent man who lives by (expounding) the Purāṇas, who deserves honour, who has studied (the scriptures of) the branch of Veda to which he belongs, who is pure, who knows the essence of Mīmāṁsā, who is learned, who censures falsehood, who looks equally upon all gods, who loves Śiva, who mutters the Śatarudriya hymn, who maintains sacred fire, who is a great speaker, who is especially a follower of the Yajurveda, should worship the book (i.e. the text of the Purāṇa). The book is written on palm leaves, is auspicious and is written in the divine script (i.e. in Sanskrit). It is extensive as it is bound (together) and has at the same time the syllable 'Om' (at its beginning). At the end of the two vertical lines here would be the line being the first line of Om. Near it should be the letter 'a'. Beginning with the topmost part and hanging down it should have an angle. That which has a (vertical) line to the right (of the letter 'a'), should be known to be the letter 'ā'. The letter 'i' is known to have two dots and bent like (the figure) six. (Long) 'ī' is said to be (formed) by a line on the left top of it. Except Om, every letter has a line on its top. But on it there is a vertical line and at its end there is (the figure) like that of a sickle. That should be known as 'u'. (Long) 'ū' is formed by means of two (figures of) sickles. Bhāratī (i.e. Sarasvatī) has said that other letters are (to be formed) like these.

50b-54a. That Purāṇa which is written in this script alone, is praiseworthy. (The Purāṇas are:) Brahma, Padma, Vaiṣṇava, Mārtaṇḍa, (the one) narrated by Nārada, Mārkaṇḍeya, and Āgneya, Kaurma and Vāmana, Gāruḍa; Laiṅga (is also) said (to be one of them); Skānda, Mātsya, Nṛsiṁha; O Rāma, Kapila is also said to be (a Purāṇa); so also Varāha; Brahmavaivarta is recommended for omens; (and there are) Śiva, Bhāgavata,

Daurga (i.e. of Durgā), Bhaviṣyottara also known by the sub-title Bhaviṣya. One should avoid others.

54b-61a. Untying the (string of) the book (the reader) should put the hallowed book on a jewelled stool. He should put on washed garments; he should bathe and be pure; he should be without wrath and without distress; he should, having first worshipped his soul and having made a mental resolve, meditate upon the white (-complexioned) Sarasvatī, of a pleased face and holding a goad, a rosary, a noose and a book. The worshipper should begin the worship after first having duly meditated upon Śiva whose figure is(white) like the cow's milk, who has three eyes, whose vehicle is the bull (Nandī), whose face is smiling, who is tranquil, who has put on a white garment, who is fearless, whose both arms have been (tossed) up, who has a crown (on his head), whose right hand is put on the left, who gives boons, who is richly adorned with many jewels, whose half seat is occupied by (Pārvatī) the daughter of (the Himālaya) Mountain, whose lotus-like feet are being meditated upon by many chief sages, who is being praised by Vedas embodied, so also by Purāṇas, so also whose lotus-like feet are waited upon by all other people.

61b-64a. The consecration of the pitcher (should be done with the utterance of the hymn) *Āpo vā idam* ('This is water'). Having taken that water, he consecrates (the water) in the vessel. He, having (consecrated) himself, and having praised (Brahman) with the hymn *Tat sad Brahma*, should then invoke all the vessels. He should worship Sarasvatī with the Ṣoḍaśārcana (worshipping sixteen times) with the ṛc *Yad vāg*, or he should do it with the recital of the Puruṣa-sūkta (hymn), or with the Gāyatrī hymn.

64b-69. He should worship the Purāṇa by (first saying) 'Om, salutation to the lord, such and such Purāṇa (is being expounded).' With the recital of the hymn *Kāṇḍāt* he should bring dūrvā (grass) and worship it (saying:) 'Om, salutation to the respectable Dūrvā'. The worship should be done along with (that of) the guardians of the quarters. Then a (young) girl should be hououred. (She should be) auspicious and should be above five years but below ten years. She should not have attained puberty. He should carefully worship her with fragrant substance, flow-

ers, sacred rice grains, incense, lamp, tāmbūla and ornaments. The worshipper should make the young girl recite this hymn: 'Speak the truth, speak what is agreeable; O venerable Sarasvatī, salutation to you, salutation to you.'

70-75a. According to the meaning of the order of the (words of the) Gāyatrī (hymn) he should make her keep near the book two dūrvās, then under it with the ṛc *Sahasra paramā*. The wise one (i.e. the worshipper) should give three pairs of dūrvās into her hand; after that she should throw (i.e. put) three small sticks into the joints of the book. Throwing them (away), he should again give her (small sticks), saying *Śivābhyām namaḥ* ('salutation to Śivas'). The verse in between two leaves suggests the success in the work (to be undertaken). O Rāghava, if the verse would come to an end on the previous leaf, then he should read the verse on the next leaf, and having discerned it, should read it aloud. The wise one should read it slowly, and should explain it slowly. Here no hurry should be done, (as) Sarasvatī gets angry due to haste. The time should be the quarter of a ghaṭikā (i.e. twentyfour minutes); hurry would be said to be done (if less time than that is taken).

75b-79. One should not hasten the speaker known as the brāhmaṇa after Vyāsa. The speaker should discern the meaning in his mind; having discerned it, he should not say what is opposed to it, O Rāma. Leaving the verse, whether proper or improper (found) in the book, if the worshipper reads another verse, it should be known to be like that only; a discord is not recommended. That verse has appeared there due to luck (i.e. chance), and luck is more powerful (than anything else). Since in the hearing (i.e. the text) there is no fault of the brāhmaṇa (who reads it), so one should not wonder; the course of destiny is crooked.

80-84a. If there is a change in a letter due to water (etc.) on the leaf, he should discard that command, and should read another (verse). Then the third (verse) should be read, and then decision (about the meaning) should be taken. The five other than the class of letters beginning with 'pa' (i.e. labials) end without a visarga. A verse not containing a mark of praise is commended for omens. The wise should always avoid these in (i.e. while finding out) an omen: the beginning of a

chapter; its end; a useless leaf or script; repetition of what is (already) stated; double (i.e. repeated) mention; a burnt leaf; script that has disappeared; doubtful letters.

84b-86a. A question should be known to be of two types depending upon its two varieties: radiant and calm. The calm (-type) also should be known to be of two types: depending upon the development of creation or maintenance. There (i.e. out of these) the calm marked with the characteristics (noted) before is recommended. Certain varieties of acts useful for mortals are (now being) described.

86b-89a. Someone taking up the mission of someone (else) becomes the questioner (i.e. asks questions). When he asks a question, what does he remember? He again holds a leaf. A leaf there is recommended. Or if a reader somehow getting delighted, and being capable of (reading) it (sees a text) intent upon detachment or glorificatory, then that should be avoided and another auspicious for that matter (should be looked for).

89b-92. Such a question as 'A dead man grasps the meaning of words' conduces to inauspiciousness. The indication of success is desired in case of a question about discussion and victory. Creation is also here. There would be one who would praise. In case of its being cruel, the victory is due to trouble. When it is calm and mixed, one would be a best merchant through means. The description of a city etc. which is mediocre, may be excellent; so also in the description of the thoughts about Kali and in that of the element of love. In the consideration of the administration of kingdom the mark of it is auspicious.

93-101a. The wise ones (should tell) what is proper for whom after (due) consideration. In case of (something) to be done about praise and detachment destruction is enjoined. By means of an error the undertaking is a little (i.e. partially) accomplished, and the undertaker of it cannot go through it. O Rāma, in the consideration of peace the meaning of one thing would have another significance. There will be the end of a visarga and the inversion of the former part. If there is another significance at the end of a chapter or at the end of a section, then (it indicates) the destruction of the undertaking. Therefore, if somebody sneezes, or if the book drops down, or if someone is struck on the head etc. it is a dishonour to the speaker, and as a result the

omen perishes. Therefore, when such a fault (is noticed), the man should avoid that omen. If there is a simile, there would (just) be the semblance of the undertaking, but not in reality; in other cases progeny (is indicated); (reference to) creation is said to give a mediocre fruit. In the decision of a meritorious undertaking eulogy is excellent anywhere. Eulogy in case of a marriage, medicines, gifts, dealings, agriculture, if it is proper, incurs no fault in being narrated. In the case of that eulogy which is improper, the undertaking does not succeed.

101b-103a. When the meaning of a verse is not understood, or when it is disregarded in a Purāṇa etc., or when there is fleeing, or the advice about a country or about the possibility of a disease, or when there is (a mention about) an attack by a thief etc. then the undertaking would terribly perish, if the question is (of a) tranquil (nature). So say those who know the ancient (accounts).

Rāma said:

103b-105a. How will he who knows the meaning of the Purāṇas, when he is not told, or when he has not heard, explain the meaning to the listeners? The decision of this (should be made). (Please) illustrate it to me, and let the meaning also be thought over. O intelligent one, you please tell it even if it explains a part.

Śambhu said:

105b-111. The meaning of the verse: *Madhūni ca madhūnyatra madhurmadhubhujam madhuḥ; madhunā madhunādyarthaṁ viṣāṇi ca viṣāṇi ca* is unintelligible; it is not recommended in (finding out) an omen. So also the verse: *Rutī rute rute rorauriri rāraṁ rarīraram; evaṁ karoti śuddhātmā brāhmaṇo brahmaṇotithiḥ.* This verse is intelligible in part (the latter half is intelligible: a pure-souled brāhmaṇa, the guest of Brahman, acts like this). (Therefore) it is not recommended in (finding out) an omen. O best of the Raghus, such and other verses occur in the Purāṇas. They have no explanation. Their text would be pre-eminent. How can the faultlessness of the speaker and the listener in the vows and restraints (be had)? How is it that the Purāṇas are not to be regarded like (i.e. on par with) the Vedas? The idea about the

meaning may be had on reciting it thrice and on thinking. The meaning of the verse, and the manner of acting (according to it) should be actually thought out. In this case the verse is (more) powerful; the manner of acting is inferior to it.

112-115a. If the leaf is useless, if the labour is fruitless, and if the leaf is burnt, then the undertaking would be lost. When the manner is hidden on the leaf, then there is lack of coordination in the undertaking. In case the leaf is withered, or if the writing on it has disappeared, then the destruction (of the undertaking) is said (to take place). In case the letters are wrong, the trouble taken is fruitless; (so also) in case of repetition or lack of agreement. If there is a comparison, the undertaking may or may not succeed. Or success may be delayed; so also when the letters are clear, there is a doubt about (the success of) the undertaking within days that are indicated.

115b-123. O king, an omen from a Purāṇa should not be seen every day. Similarly a man should not see a Purāṇa (for an omen) after he gets up after having eaten (food). Having performed worship on the night of the previous days or in the morning of the next day a man should see (the Purāṇa) for an omen, or should do so immediately (after the worship). He should tell about a special omen, particularly with reference to the manner (in which the act is to be conducted), in all auspicious deeds; the śrāddha offered to a dead person should be excluded. Inflicting a punishment, a curse, a change in the country, killing beings like demons and wicked beings is pure. Immediately after the burning of the dead body, there are spitting, vomitting, weeping, laughter, loathsomeness, pain, bad dreams, confusion etc. causing sins. So also covering with a garment, troubling, quarrel and death. Coming out of cruel (animals) and fear from the great (are there). All these and other manners should be avoided. When getting wealth is to be considered the royal creation is conducive to happiness. The rise of the Planets, the healing of diseases is also told here. What is the use of talking much here? That particular relation should be considered.

124-127. Of all the Purāṇas Skanda is recommended for this. Some choose Vaiṣṇava Purāṇa; others choose Rāmāyaṇa. There is no fault in the Vaiṣṇava Purāṇa like oaths etc. There are faults in Skanda and Rāmāyaṇa; but they are (on

a) small scale. But only a devotee of Viṣṇu and none else is able to worship it. If the worship takes place without (the worshipper being of) a good conduct, then inauspiciousness creeps in, and the omen is not successful, as a bull bound to a branch full of (i.e. allowing) all movements.

Sūta said:

128-129. Rāma who was thus advised by that brāhmaṇa Śambhu, proceeded to (find out) an omen in ascertaining (the condition of) Bibhīṣaṇa. Rāma said to Vasiṣṭha who knew the entire truth, who was proficient in (understanding the meaning of) the Purāṇas: "(Please) look into the Purāṇa".

130-132. Vasiṣṭha also said to that Rāma: "O Rāma, I am not able to speak or look into (the Purāṇa) in the vicinity of this sage." Then Rāma told Śambhu whose face was being observed by the sages: "You know the truth; you are proficient in (understanding the meaning of) the Purāṇas. So you may please tell me about the omen for my undertaking." Saying, "All right", Śambhu purified himself and became the worshipper.

133-136. Having worshipped the Skanda (Purāṇa) duly, he put the question: "Is my devotee Bibhīṣaṇa bound by a chain?" Then in three ways these three verses indicating that were seen. "Having bound the ocean, the best of Rāghavas checked the demons in the city (of Laṅkā). They, the best among those having gigantic bodies, went out of the city of Laṅkā to fight (with Rāma). The communities will have banners on their mansions. Brāhmaṇas will have Śiva as their emblem, and women will have their hair as the banners in Kaliyuga."

137-138. Thus praised, the great lord Śiva said to your deities: "I shall free your wives restrained by the demon Malla." Having observed three verses, he told about the certainty of (Bibhīṣaṇa's) being bound. (He said to Rāma:) "O Rāma, he will be soon freed. There is no doubt about it."

139-142. Having heard these words of that sage (Śambhu), Rāma, along with sages and monkeys, quickly went out to look for Bibhīṣaṇa. He quickly entered the city named Śrīraṅga. The kings that lived there worshipped Rāma. Rāma who was worshipped by them, asked them: "Where is Bibhīṣaṇa?" (They

replied:) "O god Śrī Rāma, we do not know this account". The descendant of Kakutstha (i.e. Rāma) sent the monkeys in all directions. Then the best monkeys after having gone (and looked for him) did not at all see (i.e. find) him.

143-144. Then Rāma said to that sage Śambhu: "Tell me later." Then that sage Śambhu accompanied by Rāma and followed by the sages, saying "show me" and (being told) "All right", went to a hamlet of brāhmaṇas. The brāhmaṇas there when honoured and asked showed the demon bound with many chains in an underground chamber.

145-151. Then Rāma said: "O brāhmaṇas, what has he done?" They said: "(He has committed) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. An old brāhmaṇa, an excellent, religious, aged, slim brāhmaṇa stayed in a secluded place in a grove for meditation. Having gone there, Bibhīṣaṇa hurt him with his foot (i.e. kicked him). The brāhmaṇa too, who was very much bruised, could not move even a step. Though struck by us with fatal (weapons), the wicked Bibhīṣaṇa did not die. Therefore, O Rāma, slay this sinful one and be righteous". Rāma who had suspicion, said to the brāhmaṇas: "Death is better for me (than killing my devotee). How can my devotee be killed by me? I have given him kingdom and long life. He will continue to be like that (i.e. continue to be a king and live long). Everywhere punishment is prescribed for the masters for the offence of (i.e. committed by) their servants." Having heard (these) words of Rāma, the brāhmaṇas, through amazement, said these words:

The brāhmaṇas said:

152-154a. O Rāma, death of one bound with strips is not acceptable to the sages. Think along with the best sages like Vasiṣṭha as to what is beneficial.

The sages, asked by Rāma, told the expiation: "The (sin due to the) murder of a brāhmaṇa (committed) through ignorance, is removed by means of expiations. Thus murder (committed) through ignorance requires expiation.

154b-159. That Bibhiṣaṇa should give (to brāhmaṇas) three hundred and sixty cows." Those brāhmaṇas who had bound (Bibhīṣaṇa) saying, "All right", said to one another: "We shall

free that demon. Let him go through an expiation." Having liberated the demon, the brāhmaṇas reported it to Rāma. Rāma also would not talk to him (but) said what was relevant: "Having bathed and having asked the angry sages, (and having) then (gone through) the expiation, the sinful demon may approach me." Having heard these words of Rāma, the demon, united with the sin, went through the expiation as told by the sages, and went to Rāma. He, with his soul purified by means of expiation, bowed down to Rāma. In the assembly, Rāma, laughing (i.e. smiling) said these words to him.

Śrī Rāma said:

160-162a. O son of Pulastya, from today do whatever is beneficial after thinking (properly), since, O demon, this exertion on our part was due to you. Be kind everywhere, since you are my servant.

When Rāma had (thus) settled the matter, all the sages said: "How is it that ignorance quickly overtook us?"

Śambhu said:

162b. O brāhmaṇas, due to the contempt of brāhmaṇas (that took place). The ignorance will perish.

The sages said:

163. He was charming in Tretāyuga. The Purāṇas also were entire. How will this Bhārata be employed at the end of Dvāpara?

Sūta said:

164-170. The Purāṇas are just like that; they have the same names. Today even they are told by Vyāsa; it is not otherwise. Even today the same is the rule; (and the same is) the fruit of hearing the Purāṇa. Even Mahābhārata excels in (explaining) the omens. Having worshipped just one Ādiparvan, a man should take note of the decision. Or for the decision regarding a matter all the Parvans are recommended. In this case also all the characteristics of a verse etc. mentioned before are (applicable). A particular meaning from the connection of words in a sentence

may be had, or another purport (may be had) from verses. The import is to be grasped. The explanation of a matter etc. is to be done only from the meaning. Where a meaning is seen, (it should be understood that) the primary substance is narrated. Here the determination (of the significance) should be done from the meaning of words. Therefore, everywhere the wise should not take another meaning.[1]

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIVE

The Importance of Sacred Ash

The sages said:

1. What did the illustrious Rāma do thereafter? What did the magnanimous sages do after that?

Sūta said:

2-9. When Rāmacandra was seated comfortably, (so also) Bibhīṣaṇa, the lord of monkeys, the best sages said to Śambhu: "Tell us a meritorious tale." Having heard their words, Śaṁkara said to Pārvatī: "This is the extremely beautiful house of a certain brāhmaṇa. It is adorned with a lovely garden, wells and creepers. It has (as it were) invited Cupid by means of the rows of humming bees. The sun is, as it were, proceeding to ascend to the mid-day position. We (shall) have bathed in the water of a beautiful well, and (shall have) put on fine garments. We (shall have) besmeared (our bodies with) thick, excellent sandal paste ground (i.e. mixed) with musk. We (shall) have firmly braided hair ornamented with the wreaths of the sallakī (flowers). Having tasted the tāmbūla that is large and dense and excellent and being glad and delighted, we shall remain comforting each other on a bed that is strewn in an auspicious house furnished with artificial jets, full of notes of peacocks along with sweet songs (sung) outside. If the face having a broad smile and red

1. Verses like 45ff. 74ff, 85ff, 91, 92, 108, 109ff. etc. are obscure.

lips will be kissed, then we shall have enjoyed the fruit of the mundane existence."

10-14a. Having heard these words spoken, the sages got angry and said: "Why have you told us these very auspicious words now? Due to your attachment to your beloved you made an unmeaning talk. You did not do our words (i.e. what we had asked you)." Then from the face of Śambhu who was full of anger, a very wonderful flame went out; and she too had a terrible face. She seized the wife of a certain sage and was intent upon fleeing quickly, but was frightened on seeing Rāma. Rāma too said, "I shall free the brāhmaṇa-woman." Again and again talking of liberating (the brāhmaṇa-woman), he went by Puṣpaka only.

14b-17a. Rāma did not remember (i.e. he forgot) to fix the arrow onto the bow. Śambhu also, seeing very auspicious forests and abodes, and strange cities, did not remember Rāma. Then in a moment Rāma reached the great mountain Lokāloka. Then Rāma, seeing the mountain full of houses and paths (said to the brāhmaṇas): "O illustrious brāhmaṇas, tell me which way the brāhmaṇa-woman has gone."

17b-20a. They said: "This way she has gone to the dark side of the mountain." Rāma with a pale face thought: 'Oh, it is bad'. Then Śambhu, of great lustre, gave matchless light. Due to the prowess of that light, Rāma went after that female deity to whom sacrifices are offered for destructive and magical purposes. The great region was full of darkness and without beings. From the primordial egg to the fragment of a broken jar, it spread over a hundred crores of yojanas.

20b-23a. In the darkness was settled a great silver (piece of) land. There was the city of Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), having lustre like that of a crore of suns. Seeing it, the best sages along with Rāma, were amazed. Thinking (i.e. they thought): 'What is this? How can we enter it? Could it be the fire at the time of the end of the world due to the magic power of the highest lord? Shall we die today or shall we have bliss?'

23b-30. When the sages, along with Rāma, were thus full of anxiety, Śambhu said: "O Rāma, listen to what I tell you today. For you I have brought about this illusion. This is no wonder. This is the great city of Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). It is bright with

lustre. It cannot be destroyed by heat or cold. It is accessible through knowledge (only). It is not visible to the (physical) eyes. Look above at Brahmā and others who are worshipping it. Look in all directions at the pure sages who are worshipping it. Look at the four Vedas, praising the Highest Position (i.e. the highest god). O Rāghava, see this Highest Lustre which the meditating sages like Sanaka, resorting to abstract meditation, are meditating upon. See also this Romaśa going round and saluting. Look at these crores and crores of best sages like Vālakhilya. Look at the Highest Position (i.e. the highest god) being worshipped by all women like Lakṣmī. It is described as the Brahman having a form and without a form. The ignorant do not (i.e. cannot) see it. (Only) those having the eyes of knowledge (can) see it."

31-34. On (hearing) the words of Śambhu all worshipped Acyuta, so also Girikarṇī, Tulasī, Mallikā and Māruta. (They saw) the high-souled ones worshipping the illustrious Janārdana. They saw Nārada having matted hair and a lute, uttering loudly the word (i.e. name) *Nārāyaṇa*, having a large beard and a sacred thread. He too thought to his mind: 'Who is this?' He (i.e. Nārada), full of joy, fell at the feet of Śambhu.

35-36a. The sage mentally muttered the five-lettered incantation dedicated to Śiva. "I am blessed; I am favoured; today my life is fruitful, (since) I have known your place which is saluted by Brahmā and others, which is inaccessible".

36b-42. Then Śambhu said to Nārada: "Do not say so. Behave with me in such a way that they do not recognise me. Go quickly and tell Viṣṇu about my arrival in a short time." Then, he hurriedly went and informed Viṣṇu of everything. Then he, the yogin, taking the auspicious water with materials for worship, along with Lakṣmī, and surrounded by crores and crores (of followers), seizing Nārada with his hand went (forth to greet him). The word *Viṣṇu* does not fit in the verse! He, having Garuḍa as his banner said: "Salutation, salutation to Śaṅkara." Viṣṇu honoured all with materials of worship and water for washing the feet. He, of an immeasurable intellect, made them enter (i.e. took them into) the auspicious Nārāyaṇapura (i.e. city of Viṣṇu). Then remaining in the best house, Nārāyaṇa said: "How have these come (here)? Who is this king

of great glory? Human beings cannot enter this (place). This is inaccessible even to Brahmā and others."

Śambhu said:

43-46a. We, dressed as sages, have come (here); and this valourous king is Rāmacandra who is a portion of you. O Keśava, he desires to see your wife.

Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) saying, "All right", said to Rāma "Enter (here)". Then having entered the residence, having seen Lakṣmī, and bowing through modesty he saluted her, and said (these) meritorious words (to her): "I am blessed; there is no doubt about it. Tell me what you feel."

Śrī Devī said:

46b-48. O Rāghava, you are young; you are attracted by love for sensual enjoyments; you are handsome. That Sītā, beautiful in all limbs, is your wife. Formerly you were separated from her, and being afflicted due to separation from her were, as it were, sinking. Tell me all that or you will not speak. Words accompanied by smile attract the hearts of young persons.

49-53. Having heard all those words, Rāmabhadra who was restrained and composed, having bowed down his lotus-like face, desired to go out from there. Having tormented the best among the Raghus, with a lotus—an arrow of Cupid—goddess Padmā, to whom Padmavana was dear, went out after him. Knowing Rāma to be one devoted to his only wife, they came to the king (i.e. Rāma) whose entire body was trembling and whose steps were faltering. Seeing that Śiva and Viṣṇu were very much amazed. "Oh, the firmness of his mind! His heart is not subjugated by Cupid. See his controlled steadiness. Rāma is well-known due to that. In every respect he has auspiciousness. Nothing inauspicious is (to be found) anywhere (about him)." Then Rāma said (these) words: "O lord, I would go."

54-60. Then, Rāma, permitted by Viṣṇu, went, along with the sages, along with Śambhu and Nārāyaṇa, by the Puṣpaka (plane). He quickly went to the Lokāloka (mountain), and thence to the sweet ocean. From there he went to the islands

and seas and then to Jambūdvīpa. He stayed in the hermitage of Bhāradvāja on the bank of Gautamī. Bhāradvāja, the best among the sages and the glorious one, having bathed in the great river and surrounded by his disciples, saw the Puṣpaka (aeroplane). The great sage then duly worshipped Rāma of mighty arms, so also Śiva, Nārāyaṇa, and the sages, and said to them: "O you best ones, please enjoy (yourselves) in my hermitage." On (these) words of the sage, Rāma somehow said, "All right!" Then Vasiṣṭha spoke (these) words to Rāma who had bathed in the great river, who had made offerings to deities etc. and who desired (i.e. was about) to take food: "O Rāma, religious merit would be lost if the obligatory śrāddha is not performed".

Śrī Rāma said:

61-64a. O revered one, if a śrāddha is missed on a new-moon day, on an eclipse-day, at the time of great portentous calamity, at a sacred place, at the time of the passage of a planetary body through a zodiacal sign, it is done again. An obligatory śrāddha should not at all be done again. These are your words. As when the death of my mothers took place, and when it was the mourning period, the obligatory śrāddha was not at all performed. But it was performed, as told by you, at the time of a great portentous calamity etc.

Vasiṣṭha said:

64b-66a. All these sages and this brāhmaṇa Śambhu are here. The decision will be fully made from their mouth (i.e. by them).

All the sages, deciding together, said to Śambhu: "O best brāhmaṇa, tell us everything (since) you are great."

Śambhu said:

66b-68. The (obligatory) śrāddha may be avoided (on such occasions). (But) it should be done again. I am telling about (the circumstance when) the period of impurity has approached, and when there are (other) obstacles. They prescribe all śrāddhas like the monthly, or offering jars of water, and all

other śrāddhas, so also the annual śrāddha (to be performed) after the impurity period (is over).

69-70a. There is no doubt that all (the śrāddhas) that were avoided due to the difficulty caused by the period of impurity, should be performed immediately after it. In the same way all monthly śrāddhas, the annual śrāddha, or (any other śrāddha not performed) due to any other difficulty, should be performed immediately after the period of impurity.

70b-74a. One desiring merit should perform a śrāddha on the eleventh day of the dark fortnight. If it is not performed at that time, then it is done on the new-moon day, (or) it should be performed without difficulty on (any of the) subsequent days. O Rāma, the śrāddha which should have been performed on the new-moon day in the dark fortnight, was not performed. If the month of the day of death is not somehow known (i.e. if the day is known but not the month), then the day in Mārgaśīrṣa or Māgha is recommended for the śrāddha. But when the day is not known, but the month is known, the annual śrāddha should take place on the new-moon day of that month.

74b-76. If the day or the month of the death or going away of a person is not known, then that day (on which the news is got) should be taken as a day for the performance of the śrāddha. If that also is not known, i.e. due to not knowing the day or the month, one of the three, viz. new-moon day of Āśvina or of Mārgaśīrṣa or Māgha may be taken (as the day on which the śrāddha should be performed). The waxing of the moon should be taken for the śrāddha month after month.

77-82. The *Nitya* (i.e. obligatory) *śrāddha*, the *Kumbha śrāddha* should be performed even in the intercalary month, so also on an eclipse day, day of the birth of a son etc. or of an expiatory rite. When everything is planned, there is no fault in performing it even in the intercalary month. When the rite of śrāddha is at hand, if the man who has to perform the śrāddha, is unwell, he should appoint his wife, brother or his disciple to perform it. In his absence the rite called śrāddha does not suffer. He should appoint (i.e. invite) one who would eat (the food at the śrāddha and feed him) according to his capacity at an obligatory śrāddha; so also at the monthly śrāddha performed on a new-moon day, other than the day on which the person is

dead. If he is unable, he should appoint his son or a brāhmaṇa. The śrāddha to be offered by a man who is appointed to do a royal job or employed as a servant, should be got done by a brāhmaṇa; so also in case of all difficulties. The best brāhmaṇas do not perform a śrāddha in the morning.

83-88. No such restriction about time is ordained in the case of occasional śrāddhas. The course for one who is separated from his wife is said to be his sister's or daughter's son (obscure!). The latter should be near him. The date for a śrāddha to be performed every month should be touching the afternoon. When the new-moon day spreads over two days, it should be touching the afternoon. When the day ends between the two sunrises or when there is sameness the next day is recommended (for śrāddha). That new-moon day which lasts for two afternoons is *sama* (i.e. same). When the day ends between two sunrises, then the former is recommended; when it comprises two sunrises, the latter is recommended; and when it has sameness, the latter is (ordained). When the moon has waned, the śrāddha should be done on the parvan day. She (i.e. *tithi*) is feasible on the eighth part of the new-moon day.

89-90a. If she has not passed the eight parts, that should be taken as covering the midday, and that should be the day when a śrāddha is offered to one individual only. That day should be taken (for śrāddha), which covers the evening of a parvan day. That new-moon day which lasts for a part of the afternoon should be accepted for a śrāddha etc.

90b-92a. On the day of the death (anniversary) the day for the śrāddha would be three watches in the evening. When it has ended then, as told before, it should be performed during the three watches on the next day. Among the śrāddhas, the śrāddha performed on the next day brings about the destruction of the eldest son. When the day of the deceased has arrived, the śrāddha of the full-moon day should be performed. For a brāhmaṇa it is laid down to be covering the midday.

Rāma said:

92b-93a. Please tell us about the rule to be fully followed in the case of a śrāddha-rite or rites to be performed by a mortal, so also the occasional rites.

Śambhu said:

93b-96. When the day for the śrāddha has stood by, a man, being restrained, should, on the previous day, invite best brāhmaṇas endowed with the characteristics of a (good) brāhmaṇa. (On this day) he should eat once only. He should observe celibacy, and should not talk to the low-born ones. The performer of the śrāddha should perform brushing his teeth, anointing his body or clipping his nails on the previous day and should avoid these on the next day. He should follow the rules that are laid down; and should avoid all this. If the worship is to be done thrice, he should worship his deity in the morning.

97-101. If he who knows how to perform the rites, worships (his deity) at sunrise, then he should sleep on the (bare) ground and should do so on getting up in the morning. Having performed the rites to be performed in the morning after taking a bath, he becomes free from the three debts (to sages, gods and manes) and goes to that highest Brahman. He who worships Śiva at the time of sunrise, becomes lustrous like the sun and is honoured in the heaven of Śiva. He who worships after a ghaṭikā (i.e. 24 minutes) after sunrise, becomes bright like Rudra and is honoured in the heaven of Śiva. If he worships the lord in the second ghaṭikā (of the day), he becomes radiant like Vāyu and is honoured in the heaven of Śiva.

102-105. He who would perform Śiva's worship in the third ghaṭikā, becomes bright like Kubera and is honoured in Śiva's heaven. He who devoutly worships Śiva in the fourth, fifth, sixth or seventh ghaṭikā becomes like a god in Śiva's heaven. The worship should be done at that time at which it is ordained. Or he should take a vow, observe restrictions and should worship. He should observe the rule according to his capacity in the formalities. O lord, would a rite be (a proper rite), if the rule is violated?

Śrī Rāma said:

106-109. Where should the worship of Śaṅkara be done—of Śaṅkara who is the god of gods, who is of unlimited prowess, who destroys sins when remembered, and who also gives salvation when remembered, who is auspicious, who is of an auspicious form,

who knows the auspicious essential truth, who is Soma (i.e. Śiva), who is best adorned, whose eyes are best, who shines, who is of the form of Vedas, who is formless, who knows the essence of the Vedas, who knows the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, who is to be known and cannot be known, who is a meditating saint, whose body is like cow's milk, who takes delight in bathing with cow's milk, who looks after the cows, who has three eyes, who has the three eyes in the form of the triad (of the Vedas) and who is powerful.

110-114. In between the questions he showed Rāma auspicious knowledge. He, seated as it were he had become a post, with his eyes fixed on the tip of his nose, with the stream of tears of joy trickling from his eyes and touching his cheeks, held in the lotus of his heart god Śiva whose body was very glossy like milk and was very charming. In the body of Rāma the reflection was seen. Seeing Śambhu having four hands and three eyes reflected thus, all the sages, Viṣṇu and the lord (Śiva) were very much amazed. Seeing Rāma, auspicious and of a bright form, remaining in Śambhu's chest, they kept mum for half a watch. He, referring to his question, said: "Please tell the whole thing."

Śambhu said:

115-117. According to one's desire worship is done of a stable image or of an unstable one. If an image etc. is not acquired, (then) the principal (thing) is Phallus worship. In that case also a man should carry on worship according to his authority. The Phallus worship, faulty or without a fault, is fruitful. The worship of an image, if faulty, does not become fruitful. The worship of a Phallus, fixed one or unstable, is recommended.

118-125. I shall (now) tell about the worship of an unstable (image etc.); so also about its installation and dismissal. No sage anywhere knows both these. The meditating saints always install the lord of gods, Śaṅkara, in their lotus-like hearts, take care of him, worship him and then take him out. The sacrificial priests have a great rite in worshipping the three-eyed god in fire. All the worshippers install the great lord on the Phallus of Śiva. The installation of the Phallus (should be done); its worship

should be performed; it should then be dismissed; the great Phallus of Śiva should be put on (the body); it should be decorated, be highly excellent, should be fashioned with gold, or silver, or with portions of silver; the top of it should be arranged with portions of bamboo, or tendrils of creepers, or with wood, or it would be arranged with a piece of cloth or with clay. It should be surrounded with a piece of cloth made fragrant; it should have a pair of washed garments, and endowed with a seat of clay. It should be without cold or heat, and should be endowed with four feet. It should have a portion of a hedge, and without worms and insects.

126-129a. Having covered on all sides that (Phallus of) Śiva with a soft, washed garment, and having put him (i.e. it) on an altar, one should again cover the lord; this, O Rāma, is said to be the decoration in front of the god. It should be installed, and the recitation (of the hymn) of the great lord should be done in a secluded place. Or it should be placed at the root of a wall or on an altar; so also in a protected region; and he should appoint a protector (to look after it). He should, along with restrictions, bring about the union with Prāṇa (i.e. the vital breath) etc.

129b-130a. This installation of the highest lord is said to be Rājasa (i.e. endowed with the quality of passion). The Sāttvika (i.e. of the nature of goodness) is that which is (kept) near oneself. The Tāmasa (i.e. of the nature of darkness) is again (like this):

130b-136. It should be worn so as to touch the body or would cover the entire body. The chief one is wearing it on the head. Brahmā had done like that. Wearing it by keeping it under the crown is said to be auspicious. Wearing it on the forehead is (also) recommended, as Lakṣmī had worn one auspicious one. Bāṇa had worn it on the head and also on the right (part of the) chest. The great meditating sage Harakarṇa had worn it on his ear. Some excellent demons fashioning one of iron, cut a part of their body and wear it there. Weak men having no abodes should wear it on their heads. Wearing it near the knot of the lower garment etc. is said to be most mean. When they get what is left over, it should be worn on the head. Those whose conduct is the meanest, and those who are sinners, should always wear a Liṅga. The wonder is: It is not in Yama's world.

Śrī Rāma said:

137. How does the worship of Śambhu change the (visit) to hell due to the writing firmly done by Citragupta on the forehead (of a person)? How does it destroy a sin?

Śambhu said:

138-143a. It destroys all the sin committed during hundreds of existences. Due to the destruction of all the sins and the recollection of the great god, the word *bhasma* (sacred ash) is mentioned. The wearing of (i.e. besmearing with) bhasma—the ash is excellent. As fire would destroy a writing on a tablet, in the same way besmearing the forehead with ash would destroy the writing of Yama. On its application to the face the sin done by the part above the ears would perish. On applying it to the neck sins due to enjoyments had by the throat would perish. (Its application) to the arms (destroys) the sin committed by the arms. (Its application) to the chest (destroys) sins committed by the mind. (Its application) to the navel (destroys) sins committed by the male generative organ. (Its application) to the back (destroys sins) committed by the anus. O Rāma, by applying it to the two sides (of the body) the sin due to embracing the wife of another man etc. perishes.

143b-149. In every case the application of bhasma (i.e. the sacred ash) is recommended to be in three lines. (Due to it) the holding of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, and of the three fires (is secured). For the protection of the three worlds the application was done by him. Bhasma that is consecrated and put on (i.e. applied to) the fifteen places (of the body) is auspicious—the two visceras (like the lungs etc.), the pair of the arms, above the visceras. It is accepted by all to be applied by all bodies for the purpose of worship. There is no doubt that those who eat the sacred ash, who sleep on the sacred ash, and who have their bodies smeared with the sacred ash, and bathe with (i.e. apply) sacred ash, are always freed from sins. It is said to be giving a triple power at the initiation of a brāhmaṇa. It is a protector at the time of the birth of men, and at the time of being possessed by a ghost. It is a remedy for all for the destruction of the poison of a serpent etc. A devotee of Viṣṇu or any other man who

bathes with sacred ash or has applied sacred ash, excels in his acts.

Śrī Rāma said:

150. Tell me all that: First (tell me) the importance of the sacred ash; (tell me) how it prolongs life and how it is preserved.

Śambhu said:

151-152a. It is the cause of increasing (the span of) life in the three kinds of men. (Merely) by touch it destroys sins, so also cold and hot, and it gives Śiva's position. In this matter I shall tell you an ancient account.

152b-156. There was a brāhmaṇa named Dhanañjaya belonging to Vasiṣṭha's family. He had a hundred wives endowed with form and beauty. One of them, Śāmākā, gave birth to (a son named) Karuṇa, O Sage. O Rāma, he had (a large number of) ascetic sons according to the number of wives. The father made an unequal distribution (of wealth) among them. Then there was a great enmity among the brothers. It is universal that men of the same stock have enmity (among themselves). Then (once) this Karuṇa along with hosts of sages went to the bank of Bhavanāśinī to see Narasiṁha.

157-162a. A certain brāhmaṇa had brought an excellent lovely fragrant fruit for (offering it after) seeing Nṛsiṁha. Karuṇa took that excellent fruit and smelt it. The hosts of brāhmaṇas (that were present) there joined him with a curse (i.e. cursed him): "O you of a sinful mind, from now onwards be a bee for a hundred years. The end of your curse will be (done) by the magnanimous Dadhīci." Then, he who had become a bee, said to his wife: "O auspicious one, I am turned into a bee. (Please) look after me." Saying so, and being like that (i.e. a bee) he wandered here and there. Then his kinsmen of a sinful resolve, having come to know him to be like this (i.e. to be turned into a bee), having attempted to kill him, threw him into oil.

162b-167. Taking (i.e. finding) her husband to be dead, the woman of a slim waist was afflicted. To appease her grief goddess Arundhatī said: "O you of a bright smile, I shall bring him

back to life with sacred ash only." Then she gave Arundhatī the sacred ash from the sacred fire. She threw it on the dead being (the dead man) with the Mṛtyuñjaya hymn. Then the woman of a bright smile fanned (her dead husband) gently with a fan. Then due to the power of the sacred ash, the being (i.e. the man) got up. Then when a hundred years were over, a kinsman killed (him). When the husband died, that chaste woman of a bright smile was afflicted. The chaste woman sought the refuge of Dadhīca, the best brāhmaṇa and a sage, a great devotee of the great lord (Śiva). The brāhmaṇa, a treasure of penance, said (to her):

168-171. Bhasma (i.e. the sacred ash) alone brought back to life Jamadagni, a treasure of penance, who was bereft of life (i.e. who was dead); so also Kaśyapa who was like that (i.e. who was dead); so also (it brought back to life) gods, (other) beings, and even me in olden times. Therefore, O sinless one, with the sacred ash only I shall bring back to life your being (i.e. your husband)." Saying so the venerable Dadhīca sought the succour of the great lord (i.e. Śiva). Taking the sacred ash in his hand and consecrating it with a hymn, he brought back to life the husband of that very chaste woman. At the touch of the hand of the great lord, Karuṇa became free from the curse. Going to (i.e. regaining) his original form, he went to his own hermitage.

172-174a. The chaste woman invited Dadhīca to her house for food; she solicited the brāhmaṇa sage (to take food); and then the brāhmaṇa ate (food). When the best brāhmaṇa had eaten food, a crore of (his) disciples came (there); so also gods with their bodies smeared with the sacred ash came (there). Having saluted Dadhīca, they approached him with a desire (to know) Śiva.

The gods said:

174b-178a. O you highly intelligent one, formerly our knowledge had disappeared. Seeing Gautama's wife we were affected by love. We outraged her who had gone through the auspicious rite of marriage. The knowledge of us who longed for her, perished. Then, all of us (turned into) ghosts went to the sage Durvāsas. He said: "Now (only) I shall remove the entire sin of you by

means of the Śatarudriya hymn, consecrated by Śambhu (i.e. Śiva) himself. He also gave it to me for appeasing (the sin due to) the murder of a brāhmaṇa etc."

178b-180. Saying so, Durvāsas gave the excellent bhasma (the sacred ash) to us. Then, all of us, whose minds were perverted, became at that moment only free from sins after our bodies were smeared with the sacred ash to the accompaniment of the Śatarudriya hymn. This is a wonder. We know the power of bhasma to be like this.

Dadhīca said:

181-185a. I shall tell you in brief the power of the bhasma of (i.e. sacred to) Śiva. Even in hundreds of years it is not possible to tell it in detail. Now I shall tell you the old account of the two gods, Viṣṇu and Śaṁkara, (so also about) the destruction of (the sin due to) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Formerly at the time of the deluge (of the creation) of Brahmā in an awful ocean, the great illustrious Viṣṇu lay in the water of (i.e. caused by) the deluge. Two hundred 'eggs of Brahmā' (i.e. worlds) reached his two sides. Twenty were by the side of his two feet, and twenty near his head. The lord held the 'egg of Brahmā' as a pearl (worn) on the nose.

185b-191. Certain excellent sages like Lomaśa, were practising great (i.e. severe) penance in the circle of (i.e. his round) navel. They were propitiating the great god. Then Viṣṇu of great lustre, with a desire to create (the world) thought; being intent upon profound meditation, he did not see anything. Due to great grief he repeatedly cried aloud. In the meanwhile, seeing an extraordinary lustre, Viṣṇu, through fear, closed his eyes. He (who possessed that extraordinary lustre), having a body, and lustrous like cow's milk, came there and collected the pair of the row of a crore of 'Brahmā's eggs' in his couple of hands; he held to his bosom the lustre produced by the crore of 'Brahmā's eggs'. One 'egg of Brahmā' (i.e. a world) jumped up and fell into his two hands. Not being able to see him, Viṣṇu (desiring) to see him, praised him, the immutable one, who was like that and who was (adorned) with all ornaments.

Viṣṇu said:

192-200a. Salutation to you, the god of gods; salutation to you the eternal and immutable one. I do not know you; (but) you know (me). My repeated salutations to you. I do not know your (true) state. Your lustre is difficult to look at. I seek the refuge of you who have put on emerald ear-rings, who are adorned with a row of golden necklaces, who have put on a jewelled ring, who are illustrious, who have put on ornaments on your arms and viscera, whose eyes are slightly red, bright and long (i.e. broad), who view (sharply) like an arrow, who have an (additional) eye on your forehead, who are immutable, whose eyebrows create the illusions of Cupid's bow, who are the lord, whose lovely nose is high, whose cheeks are spotless, whose smile is gentle, whose face is pleased, who are mighty, who appear (charming) like the young moon, who have put on the red garment of wisdom, who have devised the anklets of the Vedas. O mighty one, give me sight. Be the refuge of one that is doomed by ignorance and that is helpless, blind and pitiable.

Then he (i.e. Śambhu) gave him divine sight capable of seeing himself. Then Viṣṇu, seeing the three-eyed Śambhu standing before him, said (to him): "Who are you? I do not recognise you of a great glory. I am able only to salute you but not to recognise you."

Sadāśiva said:

200b-201a. I shall give you knowledge. Bathe in the ocean. After that have bath with (i.e. apply) sacred ash, and after that I shall give you knowledge.

The lord said:

201b-203a. Nowhere is there water fit for my bath.

Thus addressed, he with 'Brahmā's egg' touching his body, sat there. It was not proper for Viṣṇu to bathe in thigh-deep water. Śambhu laughed (and said): "Oh, there is too much water for (your) bath."

Dadhīca said:

203b-210a. Then god Śiva looked at Viṣṇu with the eye on his forehead; and looked at him whose subtle limbs had disappeared with his left eye. Then Viṣṇu, having a subtle and cold body was (thus) told by Śambhu: "O Viṣṇu, take a bath; this deep lake is fashioned". Then Viṣṇu was not able to enter that deep lake prepared on Śiva's lap for bathing. Viṣṇu said: "There is no way to get into the lake. O god, give me a way (to enter it)." Then Śambhu said to him: "O mighty one, formerly this large (quantity of) water was a crore yojanas deep. When you entered it, it has become thigh-deep. When you are (already) standing there, how do you say you have no entrance? In this deep lake of mine I see that this thigh (of you) is of the measure of eight fingers. Get in; I shall give a touch to (i.e. support) your feet. One sentence uttered by me is a staircase; it is Veda that has come out of my words."

Viṣṇu said:

210b-211a. Nobody here has the ability to climb up (the staircase of) words. It is possible to grasp a tangible object. How can the scriptures be grasped?

Śambhu said:

211b-214a. A man has no capacity to grasp or climb up objects. Accept this great Veda.

Then Hari too accepted it. He, with his hands bent due to lack of strength, was as it were falling. (Then) Viṣṇu said to Śiva: "It is not possible for me to hold it." Śiva laughed, as it were dropping into the great deep lake. (He said): "O Keśava, having gone up the staircase, please take a bath."

Dadhīca said:

214b-217. He (i.e. Viṣṇu), having duly bathed there (i.e. in the great deep lake) where the Veda had become the staircase and the water was thigh-deep, came out, and said: "I have bathed. What next is to be done?" Then Śambhu said to Viṣṇu: "Tell me whether you are thinking or not thinking of something in your mind." Hari said: "(I am) not (thinking of) anything."

Then Śambhu said to him: "Having purified yourself with the bath with (i.e. the application of) sacred ash, you will know the highest auspicious object; for that is recommended for one who is initiated. I would protect that."

Dadhīca said:

218-222. Then Śiva took (i.e. scratched) the sacred ash on his chest with his nail, consecrated it with Om and the Gāyatrī (hymn) of the form of Brahman, took it with (i.e. between) his fingers, and with (the accompaniment of the hymn of) five syllables he threw it on the head and all limbs of Viṣṇu. Gazing on him with tranquil eyes, Śiva said to Viṣṇu: "Live (long). Meditate on what there is in your heart." Then he was intent upon meditation. In his heart he saw a lamp of a long (i.e. big) shape and very bright. Viṣṇu said to Śiva: "I have actually seen a lamp." Śiva said: "O Viṣṇu, your knowledge is not mature. Eat the sacred ash. (Then) your knowledge will be complete."

Viṣṇu said:

223-233. I shall eat the sacred ash. Formerly I have bathed with (i.e. applied to my body) the sacred ash.

Seeing the lord, accessible through devotion (only), Viṣṇu ate the sacred ash. (Then) there was a great wonder: In a moment Viṣṇu became one having the lustre of a ripe bimba fruit and having the complexion of a pure pearl. Since then this Viṣṇu is pleased and is (of a) white (complexion). Then again he became engrossed in meditation, and in the lamp saw a man who was like a pure crystal, who was Śiva with three eyes and two hands, who gave a boon with the right hand and fearlessness with the left, whose body was like that (of a child) of five years, whose brilliance was like that of a myriad moons, whose ear-rings were made of emeralds, who was adorned with a row of necklaces, who was handsome due to a jewelled ring, who had put on ornaments on his arms and chest etc., whose lips were small and red, whose eyes were long and reached his ears, whose eyes were sharp like arrows, who had an eye on his forehead, who was immutable, whose eyebrows created the illusion

of Cupid's bow, who was the lord, whose lovely nose was high, whose cheeks were spotless, whose smile was gentle, whose face was pleased, who looked like the young moon, who was mighty, who had put on the red garment of wisdom, who had devised the anklets of the Vedas, who had put a jewelled Om in the left finger (i.e. finger of the left hand), and who was immutable. Then Viṣṇu became (i.e. looked upon himself as) blessed. Then Śambhu said: "O Viṣṇu, what did you see in your heart?" Viṣṇu said: "First I saw a man of gentle body." Saying so, Viṣṇu fell at the feet of Śiva.

Viṣṇu said:

234. I do not know the power of the sacred ash, or whence can I know your prowess? Salutation to you, salutation to you. I seek your refuge.

Śiva said:

235. O illustrious one, ask for a boon which you desire with (i.e. have in) your mind.

Having then heard the words of Śiva, Viṣṇu chose an excellent boon.

Viṣṇu said:

236-239. O Śambhu, let me always have devotion for the couple of your feet.

Then having granted the boon Śambhu said these (words) to Viṣṇu: "Being happy with the application of the sacred ash, you will be my devotee."

Dadhīca said:

Thus I have told you from the beginning the great knowledge due to (the application of) the sacred ash. Therefore, O you all gods, apply sacred ash carefully.

The gods had their eyes dilated due to wonder (and said:) "Let it be so." He who every day listens to this meritorious, excellent account, is freed from all sins, and goes to the position of Śaṁkara.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIX

A Sinful Brāhmaṇa Becomes an Attendant of Vīrabhadra

Śucismitā said:

1. O great sage, the eating of the sacred ash is seen to prolong life. It is capable of giving a course of the other world.

Dadhīca said:

2-8. In this matter I shall tell you an old and well-known account of what happened between Yama and Citragupta. Formerly a dog wandered through hunger in Mithilā. In a hundredth previous existence he was a brāhmaṇa of sinful resolves. In his youth he was a very intelligent (man) who was endowed with the (knowledge) of Vedas and sacred texts. Having gone to Gaṅgā for bathing, he bathed (in Gaṅgā) and having worshipped his dead ancestors, gods and sages also, went to the city (called) Prāttalikā. He took shelter in a brāhmaṇa's house. There was staying a daughter of a kṣatriya. She was young. Her lover was killed. She had lost her kingdom. She possessed wealth of six crores of niṣkas. At night, after moonlight, she came near the brāhmaṇa who was asleep and was handsome in all limbs, and seeing him said these words: "O brāhmaṇa, wherefrom have you come? To which country will you go?"

The brāhmaṇa said:

9. Stirring (out) at a wrong time would certainly create suspicion (in the minds) of all; so also the talk between us who are young in this private, mirthful chamber.

The kṣatriya woman said:

10-11. A talk in private (between a young man and a young woman) is not censurable when a tale is told, on a pilgrimage, at a sacred place, at the time of the devastation of the country etc., at the time of a famine, or when the village is on fire. You yourself first took shelter in my house. I am (just) staying in this house. (Therefore) nobody will have a suspicion in this matter.

The brāhmaṇa said:

12-17. I have to keep mum. Quickly go from my presence.

Thus addressed by the brāhmaṇa she thus thought to herself: 'Somehow or other I should have union with him. I shall (now) weep so that he will come to console me. When he will come to console me, he will raise me up. Then I shall get up and have contact of his neck with my creeper-like arms (i.e. I shall throw my creeper-like arms round his neck); and as it were fainting, I shall touch his body with the pair of my breasts. Seeing me having lost consciousness, he, the best brāhmaṇa who would be seated, will put my body on his lap. I, as it were being unconscious, will throw off my garment, and as it were weeping (i.e. pretending to weep), shall show him that (private) part (of me) which is very lovely, which is free from hair, which has the shape of a ripe aśvattha-leaf, which is the very fragrant abode of Cupid.

18-22. Having, while rolling on his body, removed his garment, I shall make his mind perplexed and bring the brāhmaṇa under my control. His mind would not be (as perturbed) when (my private part) is not seen as it would be (perturbed) when it is seen. The mind is not so (much perturbed) in (i.e. due to) talk as it is by means of actual seeing (the private part). The mind is not (perturbed) like that in a mirthful talk as it is in (i.e. by means of) a dialogue. The mind is not so (much perturbed) by means of a touch as it is in (i.e. due to) a mirthful talk. (The mind is) not so (much perturbed) by touching the vulva as by seeing it. Whose mind does not become excited and whose semen does not trickle down on seeing a woman's armpits, her pair of breasts and her vulva being touched (by herself)?'

Dadhīca said:

23-28. Thinking like this with (i.e. in) her mind, that kṣatriya woman went to her house; and having approached the door of her house, she wept gently. She wept for a long time. 'Removing the grief of a woman, a child, an old man, a feeble person, a king, a meditating saint due to poison, fire, water or the fall of a stone etc. is recommended; they say it is like giving a well.' Thinking like this that brāhmana, the treasure of kindness, being

pure and with his mind pleased, went near her, and then the brāhmaṇa said to her: "Enough of (i.e. desist from) this great grief going against (happiness in) this and the next world. This leads to the drying up of the body and harms the mind also. O you young woman, give up this grief. It is no use grieving. What is the cause of your wailing; what is it for which you are weeping?"

Dadhīca said:

29-35a. Thus addressed by that brāhmaṇa, she did not say anything. She fell on the ground as if she had fainted; and looked at him (and showed) as it were she did not see him. The brāhmaṇa, knowing the highest truth, made her get up. When he made her get up, she got up but again and again fell down. The brāhmaṇa sat down and again and again got her up who had repeatedly fallen down, put her on his lap, and wiped her eyes. Then as it were she had fainted, she removed her garment, and showed him her breasts, her private part, her arm-pits and eyes. Having hung to his neck with her arms, she touched the brāhmaṇa with her breasts. The moonlight was clear, and there were gentle breezes. Then the brāhmaṇa became engrossed in thinking: 'This is not my work. It is proper for the father, the mother, the husband or the teacher. To me who am not enlightened, everything appears inauspicious.'

35b-40a. Then Cupid came there when the two were in private. Cupid, of a bad heart, struck the brāhmaṇa with sharp arrows. The brāhmaṇa, being afflicted due to the arrows of Cupid, became lustful, and thought: 'This one, very beautiful in all limbs, appears to be lustful. Otherwise how can there be horripilation on her vulva? All that will be clear from the touch of her breasts.' Thinking like this, the brāhmaṇa touched her breasts and vulva. She too, who feigned a swoon, had a smile on her face. She closely embraced the brāhmaṇa, and kissed his face. Then they were united even for a hundred years.

40b-42. When a hundred years had passed, the brāhmaṇa one day in the morning went to a river to bathe. She too went with the brāhmaṇa. He bathed there and listened to the Kaurma Purāṇa which destroys all sins and gives (i.e. produces) devotion

to Śiva; and heard this verse uttered by the one who knew the Purāṇa.

43-45a. "He who kills a brāhmaṇa, he who drinks liquor, a thief, he who violates his teacher's wife, becomes free from the sin by just listening to the Kaurma Purāṇa." Hearing this statement, the brāhmaṇa said to that brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Purāṇas: "The sins committed by me have no number (i.e. cannot be counted). Tell me that which would destroy the heap of all (my) sins."

The brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Purāṇas said:

45b-47. Propitiate Śaṅkara, the god of gods, the lord of gods. O brāhmaṇa, by means of his worship all your (sin) will perish. Sin is said to be darkness. It perishes by means of the lamp of knowledge, or O brāhmaṇa, all sins perish due to the worship of him. Those who are bereft of knowledge and worship certainly fall into a hell.

Dadhīca said:

48-51a. Then the brāhmaṇa went to an excellent temple of Śiva. (There) he worshipped Śaṅkara with a thousand droṇa flowers. Then he went home and took food. Leaving the kṣatriya woman the brāhmaṇa went to the desired region. Having procured food to be eaten on days of fast, and having eaten it according to his capacity, he went to the temple of Śiva. Going there, he ate his meal with the ghee in the lamp outside the temple. Then he was under the sway of death, and went to Yama's world.

Yama said:

51b-57. Certain sins formerly committed by you have perished. O brāhmaṇa, since you offered worship to Śaṅkara on one day, a thousand of your sins have perished. Of the sins that have remained, the fruit is a fall into hell, (and staying there) for two crores of years, and having the existence of a dog a hundred times. Due to stealing the ghee from the lamp of Śiva a man has to resort to (i.e. to live in) hell for a hundred very awful years. He turns into wood in the Kumbhīpāka hell, and repeatedly becoming ash for ten years,

he then becomes an insect for another ten (years). Then for ten years he becomes the wick of a lamp. Sinking in and coming up from phlegm, impure feces, and pools of urine and semen, he eats phlegm, feces and dirt. Then when the residence in hell is over, he gets a hundred existences as a dog.

58-62. Hearing these words of Yama, the brāhmaṇa fell down. Then his dear wife became full of anxiety. In the meanwhile, Nārada came near her. She who was extremely afflicted, fell at the feet of Nārada. Having raised her, Nārada said to the pure one about her dead (husband): "O innocent one of large eyes, please go to your husband. O you of large eyes, your husband, abandoned by his kinsmen, is dead. O auspicious one, you should not weep. Enter fire (i.e. funeral pyre of your husband)."

The brāhmaṇa woman said:

O sage, tell me whether I should or should not go, so that the time for entering the fire should not elapse.

Nārada said:

63. That city is at a distance of a hundred yojanas from here. The brāhmaṇa (i.e. the body of your husband) will be burnt tomorrow.

Avyayā said:

64-69a. O sage, I deserve to go to the lord of my body, who is away.

Hearing her words, Nārada said to her: "You sit upon the handle of my lute. I shall go (there) in a moment." Saying so, he made haste and went there—to the country and abode of the dead brāhmaṇa. The sage said to that Avyayā: "If you will go to (i.e. desire to enter) fire there, then do not weep. O daughter, if you have committed a sin like enjoying another man (than your husband) then make an expiation to purify that. On entering into the fire your minor sins will perish. Leaving (i.e. except) entering the fire I do not see any other (expiation) for women for the appeasement of all sins."

Dadhīca said:

69b-70a. Impelled by Nārada's words, she said: "O great sage, what have women to do at the time of entering fire?"

Nārada said:

70b-75a. They have to bathe, sanctify themselves, have to put on ornaments and apply unguents, have to apply sandal (-paste), have to put on flowers, have to have incense, turmeric and sacred rice grains. They have to wear an auspicious thread and apply red lac to their feet. They should give gifts according to their capacity, they should speak agreeable words, and should have a pleasing face. They should listen to (the sound of) many auspicious musical instruments and songs. When a sin of (the nature of) infidelity is committed, then, with reference to that old sin (i.e. sin committed previously), that is said to be an expiation for the appeasement of that sin. Then she should put on the ornaments and offer them to a brāhmaṇa. In the absence of (such) ornaments, she should not make (the brāhmaṇa) perform the (rite of) expiation. In no other way, and nowhere, can that sin perish.

Avyayā said:

75b-76a. I shall do all this; (but) I do not have turmeric. What are the ornaments? O brāhmaṇa, give all that to me.

Nārada said:

76b. There is no such article of the auspicious state of wifehood as is required.

Dadhīca said:

77-78a. Then in a moment he (i.e. Nārada) went to Śiva's abode, Kailāsa. Seeing Girijā (i.e. Pārvatī) he saluted her and said to her: "O mother, give me turmeric, ornaments and an auspicious thread."

Pārvatī said:

78b-79a. How should I give any ornament to a widow? If I give (her an ornament), widowhood is not possible.

Nārada said:

79b-80a. O mother, a woman is not a widow as long as her husband's body remains (unburnt). Till the husband's body is burnt, there is no impurity and the auspicious state of wifehood remains.

Pārvatī said:

80b-83. No other body (than mine) deserves to put on my ornaments and turmeric. When ornaments etc. are given by me, long life is prescribed. Whatever you have said would be given by (my maid) Jayantī.

Then he went to Jayantī and carried whatever was given by her. Then the sage gave turmeric to Avyayā who was being given a bath. Then the sage gave her fine garments and ornaments. He said to her: "Who will perform your funeral rites? Appoint him."

Avyayā said:

84. O sage, you alone are the cause of (i.e. will perform) all rites in my case. You are my father. Perform every (rite); salutation to you, O best sage.

Dadhīca said:

85-90. Then having burnt (i.e. consigned to fire the body of) the brāhmaṇa, Nārada said to her: "O Avyayā, go, and enter the fire if you so desire." Then the chaste lady decorated (herself), and having saluted Nārada after going round him three times keeping him to her right, dedicated her mind to Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī). Desiring to please Pārvatī, she separately (i.e. one by one) touched her very fine auspicious thread, turmeric, so also sacred grains and flowers, garments, musk, sandal, golden comb, various fruits, from presents to her garments—gave all (these) to elderly married women. The chaste woman went three times round the fire which was, as it were, burning the sky with rows of flames, by keeping it to her right, and stood in front of it. Then with the palms of her hands folded and with a smiling face she said these words:

Avyayā said:

91-98. O regents of the quarters like Indra, O mother Earth, O Sun, O all gods like Dharma (i.e. Yama), hear my words: "If, from (the day of) marriage till today I have, day and night, devoutly served my husband by words, thought, and by acts, and if in the three states (of youth, adulthood and old age) I have not transgressed (in my duties to him), then truly grant me going with my husband."

Saying so, she quickly dropped the flower from the tip of her hand (and) entered the blazing fire. Then she saw an aeroplane, which was excellent like the Sun and graced with the music of celestial nymphs. She got into the aeroplane and went to heaven with her husband. Then Yama, having honoured that chaste wife, said to her: "You will have (i.e. live in) heaven eternally; (now) no sin of you remains. In hell your sin was washed off (by staying there) for two crore years. There is no doubt about it. But (still) there is a sin. One is committed by eating the ghee of the lamp (kept in honour) of Śiva. There may not be a fall into hell, but will be hundred existences as a dog."

Avyayā said:

99. How can there be (a fall into) hell for those who are purified by entering fire? The destruction of all sins would take place by entering into fire.

Yama said:

100-106. Formerly Śambhu had said that the sin of him who steals (the articles) of Śiva, never perishes. Other sins may perish. Then he obtains the existence of a dog, which would be (continuing) for a hundred years after that.

Reaching the abode of Dadhīca he has entered the mouth of death. Near his wall there was the sacred ash that was consecrated. The dog fell into the sacred ash, died, and went to Yama. Yama honoured him, bowed down to him (and said): "You are the most meritorious sage. There is no proper place for you in my house. (Please) go out." Then that dog, impelled by Yama, went out and

remained there. Nārada saw him who remained there with tormentation; and he asked him: "Why do you, the bright one, remain here? O you of high intelligence, I know you to be a devotee of Śiva, who died remaining in the ash of (i.e. sacred to) Śiva. There is no residence in Yama's world for them who are devotees of Śiva (but) who being sinful, cast their bodies. This is Śiva's order given by Śiva."

Dadhīca said:

107-112. Speaking thus to the dog, the sage went to Kailāsa. Having saluted Śiva (by prostrating himself) like a staff, he respectfully said to him: "O god, a certain dog (having come) from Yama's city remains outside. He is dead in the sacred ash. Therefore, he deserves (residence in) your heaven." Then Vīrabhadra, the chief among the attendants, being impelled by Śiva, brought that dog having a divine form and having saluted the feet of Śiva. Then he respectfully said to the god. The attendant of Śiva (i.e. Vīrabhadra) said to the god: "Make him an attendant (i.e. one of the attendants) of me." Śiva said: "All right." The attendant became one with a dog's face (i.e. the dog became one of the attendants).

Dadhīca said:

O you Śucismitā, the importance of the sacred ash is matchless. O you of a good vow, what more than this do you wish to hear?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVEN

Vīrabhadra's Heroic Deed

Śucismitā said:

1. O brāhmaṇa, O sage, tell me how formerly the sacred ash protected Kaśyapa, Jamadagni of the gods?

Dadhīca said:

2-6. Formerly gods accompanied by Kaśyapa and others went to a well-known mountain named Śokara. In the middle of the mountain was a very beautiful (forest) which was full of many birds, which was resorted to by various hosts of sages, which was the resort of Vāsudeva, which was charming, which was resorted to by bevies of celestial nymphs, which was crowded with strange trees, which was bright with flowers of all seasons. We and others entered the best mountain (forest) like that and praising Viṣṇu went there to lord Śiva. We saw a great flame there and we entered it. Excepting me that deity (i.e. that flame) burnt (other) sages. After that it (also) burnt me. O auspicious one, we were reduced to ash.

7-14. Seeing us like this, that brave Vīrabhadra went to that mountain for some reason. With his entire body smeared with sacred ash, he remaining at the top, auspicious and pure, all alone, desireless and tranquil, heard the sound of wailing. Then he was full of thought: 'The sound of the bodies of dead men and the smell as it were of dead bodies, are being perceived.' Deciding like this in his mind, he went to the fire of great brilliance. Then that fire also started to burn Vīrabhadra. But it went out as the fire of (i.e. burning) grass (i.e. hay) would go out on receiving (i.e. being sprinkled over with) water. Then Vīrabhadra saw a great, mighty flame, which went (up) to the sky even (like) flame falling (i.e. dropped by) Śiva (obscure!). The brave Vīrabhadra thought in his mind: '(This) flame is the destroyer of hundreds of crores of beings. So for the protection of all I desire to drink it. As a thirsty man drinks water, I shall consume this great flame.' In the meanwhile a divine voice said to (Vīrabhadra) the hero.

The voice said:

15-17. O hero, do not do a rash act. Where is your thirst, and where is the fire? (i.e. What a great disparity is there between the two!). Those that are thirsty are interested in water. Opposite is (their attitude towards) a wild fire. The lord of demons, viz. Praṇaṣṭa had a large head extending over a yojana. There was another (demon) whose face extended over a hundred yojanas

and who had a hundred arms. The illustrious Agastya had completely drunk (the water of) the ocean. This flame destroyed these and other well-known (beings).

Vīrabhadra said:

18-19a. This flame will not cause fear as told by you. O Sarasvatī, I shall be angry with you. Know me to be Vīrabhadra whose position is honoured by all gods.

Bhāratī said:

19b-22a. O sage, what I said was with an affectionate feeling, and not through hatred or any other feeling. O hero, give up your anger and do what is beneficial for yourself.

Saying so the goddess vanished through the fear of the hero. Then that hero easily drank (i.e. consumed) the great flame.

22b-26a. In a moment Vīrabhadra all alone drank that great flame which extended over a hundred yojanas and was extremely difficult to bear. Just on seeing the heaps of ashes (of the bodies) of (gods) led by Indra and of sages, the magnanimous Vīrabhadra called them (out). Those dead sages and residents of heaven (i.e. gods) did not respond. Knowing the destruction of the sages and gods, Vīrabhadra thought: 'How can I, (though) an experienced one, bring all of them back to life?' Through meditation he knew (how to bring them back to) life. Sipping (water) he consecrated with the hallowed Mṛtyuñjaya hymn and with sacred ash the ashes (of the bodies) of the dead.

26b-28a. Then the best sages, having resorted to their respective bodies, got up. Then they went to the very bright side of the mountain. There also they were swallowed by a serpent of a mighty body. Then the mighty hero (Vīrabhadra) went to the great serpent.

28b-33a. Seeing Vīrabhadra to have come (there), the serpent started fighting. The serpent, taking up various forms, fought for a year. Then the hero holding with both his hands, the two lips (of the serpent), tore his entire body into two (parts). Seeing the gods dead, Śaṅkara brought them back to life with the sacred ash only. Then the gods, along with the sages, saluted Vīrabhadra and went their way. (Then) they saw the

demon Pañcameḍhra who had come there, had a large body, was endowed with ten arms, possessed five feet, had eight heads, and desired a large (quantity of) food.

33b-38. That demon, when he had fought with the monkey Vālin, who had certainly double the strength of Viṣṇu, having the body of a large boar, had suddenly struck Vālin with his five feet in boxing, and had proceeded to kill Sugrīva with his hands. He put Sugrīva into his mouth and swallowed him like a morsel. Seeing Vālin and Sugrīva swallowed, he thought: 'How shall I kill him and how shall I save the monkey?' When he was thinking like this the lord of demons ate up the monkey with one effort. Seeing the demon like that, all the gods and sages became intent on running (away).

39-44. Seeing them running, that demon Pañcameḍhra took all of them with all his hands and ate them up. Then Vīrabhadra, seeing the monkeys, sages and gods being eaten up (by the demon) angrily took in his hand a rock extending over fifty yojanas and struck it on the heads (of the demon). The middle head (of the demon) fell down. Then taking the peak of the mountain which was a hundred yojanas long and holding it more firmly, he struck the lord of mountains. Then the demon said to that three-eyed Vīrabhadra: "(Now) see the strength of my arms. I have seen your might. There is a couple of swords. They are glistening with oil, and they are fifty yojanas high (i.e. long). They extend over a yojana, are very strong, and have (good) characteristics. You take one liked by you. The one that remains is dear to me."

45-49. Saying, "All right", the very strong Vīrabhadra took one sword; and he moved the sharp sword with his hand; and then roared angrily. The best demon also took a sword and roared in the same way. Having approached Vīrabhadra, he put it on his neck (i.e. struck on his neck with it). The limb (i.e. the neck) was pierced, and profuse blood flowed out. With one hand the demon then drank the blood. Vīrabhadra angrily struck the demon on the region of his neck. He took the two heads that were cut off and that were falling down. The magnanimous one swallowed them, and roared like a lion. Due to that great roar the three worlds were agitated.

50-55. With their bodies pierced by strokes of swords made by each other, they who were roaring and who were wet with blood, appeared like the blossomed kiṁśuka (trees). The god (Vīrabhadra) and the demon (Pañcameḍhra) with swords (in their hands) fought for a year. After that they fought a mace-fight for a year. Then a battle with knives took place (between the two) for a year. Then again taking two swords, they fought with each other. Then the lord of (Śiva's) attendants, of the nature of a tusk, saying, 'Prosperity (to you)', and with his eyes red with anger, moved a great sword before him, and cut off his entire forest-like neck, as (one would cut off) a plantain tree. Taking all the heads, he ate them up. Having torn his body with his nails, he took out and saw the deities, the lordly monkeys (i.e. Vālin and Sugrīva) and the great goddess.

56-63. Seeing this very fierce battle, Nārada went and told Brahmā, Vāsudeva and Śaṅkara (about it): "The sages, the deities, the two monkeys Vālin and Sugrīva have been protected by him; and he, of the nature of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva has brought the two (monkeys) back to life." An awful boon was given by Śiva to a demon. There was a mighty demon in the kingdom of Hiraṇyakaśipu. He wonderfully fought for a hundred years with the gods. Many fled in various ways, and hundreds of demons died. He, thinking like this, was protected by his preceptor, Śukra: "O Śukra, I died a hundred times, and was brought back to life by you only. Make me immortal, and make him who is in my belly mortal (i.e. let me be immortal, and let those eaten by me die). Otherwise, I shall die; there is no doubt about it. O preceptor, I had a very terrible fight with Yama. In the battle, that valorous king Yama was swallowed up by me. He entered my belly, pierced it and roared. I then died, but was again brought back to life by you. Therefore, I shall practise penance for the death of those who are in my belly."

Śukra said:

64-65a. This is so. There is no doubt about it. You practise it duly. There is a holy place (called) Syamantapañcaka. Please go there.

The demon said:

65b-74. I shall practise a very terrible (i.e. severe) penace, (like) which was not practised by gods and demons. I shall bind with iron fetters my feet at the end, i.e. at the ankles. I shall fashion a couple of iron-pillars having iron-straps. I shall bind (i.e. keep tied) my feet in the strap and put my head below (and feet above); similarly I shall keep my mouth open, and make my face (let) down. I shall remain with a flame fluttering in a circular way and will keep my eyes open. I shall practise penance like this, whosoever may be the giver of the boon. Let Brahmā or Śaṅkara or Viṣṇu be the giver of the boon, whosoever may grant it.

Having thus spoken to his preceptor Bhārgava (i.e. Śukra), he practised the penance for five or six months and again practised another penance. Having cut off his head with his nails, he offered it, with (the accompaniment of) a hymn, into the fire. He offered his four heads, with (the utterance of) the hymn, 'Salutaion to Bhadra'. When the demon was trying to abandon (i.e. to offer) his fifth head, the revered lord of Ambikā (i.e. Śiva) stood up from the fire. He resembled a pure crystal and was adorned with the young moon. The great god said to the demon who had bent down his head: "O demon, do not do a rash act. I am the giver of a boon. Ask for a boon."

The demon said:

75-81a. You, the great god, are the giver of many boons. Let my heads that are struck off grow again and let the beings swallowed by me die. Let me have four times the power of Viṣṇu, having the body of the Boar. You may never be angry with me and be always near me. A man would come up when your matted hair is pulled out. Let me die at his hands; and not (be killed) by others. This is what I ask for.

"It shall be just so". Saying like this Śiva disappeared. (Bhāratī said:) "You have killed the sinful demon who had received such a boon." Then having embraced the hero (Vīrabhadra), Viṣṇu, Śiva and the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā) went as they had come. The wives of deities etc. fell (i.e. prostrated before him)

on the ground like a staff and said to Vīrabhadra: "Salutation to you, O lord of the god of gods; salutation to you, O eternal and endless one; salutation to you; be the giver of boons."

Vīrabhadra said:

81b-86. By means of the sacred ash I shall bring back to life the gods along with the sages and the monkeys. You should be pleased; now you should not grieve.

Saying so, Vīrabhadra brought them back to life with the sacred ash. The sages and the gods, so also the two monkeys (i.e. Vālin and Sugrīva) got up. With the palms of their hands put to their heads, they who were pleased, saluted him, and said: "O dear one, you have brought (us) back to life; you are our spiritual father. O you born of Śaṁkara, always be our refuge. Punish the children on seeing their bad behaviour; so also protect them as your own sons from the torment inflicted by the enemies and from diseases. O you sinless one, you punished those who had committed sins at the sacrifice of Dakṣa. O father, we are now (to be protected by you) like children."

Vīrabhadra said:

87-92. This is true. There is no doubt about it. Remember me when you are troubled. The trouble will quickly perish. The troubles from demons to those who recite the name of Vīrabhadra a hundred and eight times, beginning with 'Om' and ending with (the word) 'salutation', with (i.e. using) the dative (as Vīrabhadrāya), will come to an end. At the time of trouble from brāhmaṇa-ghosts and fear from goblins etc. all the troubles vanish (merely) by remembering the name (of Vīrabhadra). (One should remember him) whose eyes are like the brilliance of lightning, who is the lord, whose lips are tawny and shining with fangs resembling the young moon, whose body is very dark, who has the garland of matted hair, and who has on his body three lines of sacred ash. This recollection (of Vīrabhadra) is told for (getting) freedom from brāhmaṇa-ghosts. All this is explained in the hymn of Vīrabhadra.

Dadhīca said:

93-95. The hero accomplished (like this). So also the sages and gods that had come. By these three the great importance of the sacred ash is proclaimed. Of him who recites or listens to it, it destroys the sins, gives devotion to Śiva, and prolongs life and good health.

Śucismitā said:

I am happy; I am blessed; I am best among women. My sins are destroyed. My salutation to you, O best sage.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHT

How to Prepare Sacred Ash

Śrī Rāma said:

1. O illustrious one, tell about the origin of the sacred ash, the greatness of the sacred ash, and the religious merit (earned) through the application of the sacred ash.

Śambhu said:

2-8a. O Rāma, I shall tell you about the origin of the sacred ash. (I shall tell you about its effect) by (just) remembering or telling about it. O king, listen to it. He who is that eternal god Sadāśiva, who is saluted by Brahmā, who has three eyes, who is the prop of virtues, who is beyond qualities, who is unchangeable and immutable, had once a desire to create on seeing the three qualities in himself—this triad of qualities should be known as the three Vedas. O dear one, having divided himself and the region there, he created on his right side the son, viz. Brahmā and Hari from his left side. At the back side he created Maheśāna (i.e. Śiva); thus the mighty one created three sons. As soon as they were born they became the three gods—Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. They distinctly spoke these words: "Who are you? Who are we?" To those sons Śiva

said: "You are the sons, (and) I am your father. O sons, resort to these three qualities which are the cause of (all) acts."

The sons said:

8b-16. O lord, who should resort to which quality and how long? How can there be the cessation from the qualities? Tell this to us.

Śiva said:

As long as you have (i.e. retain your) knowledge or as long as you live, each one of these qualities should be retained by you. Brahmā should retain the quality of Sattva (i.e. goodness), Viṣṇu should retain Rajas (i.e. activity) and Maheśvara (should keep) Tamas (i.e. ignorance or darkness).

As soon as the lord of gods had said this, Brahmā took up Sattva. He could not move it; then how could he be capable of holding it? Abandoning that quality, he took up the quality of Rajas. He was not able to move it; (so) he took up the Tamas quality. He was not able to move it. He fell down and wept; and Viṣṇu held the Rajas quality with his left hand. (Then) Maheśa held the Tamas quality with his two fingers; one, i.e. Viṣṇu, with his two fingers, took up the Sattva (quality). He sustained Brahmā at the footstool, and danced. The giver of the boons, having seen Śiva who was dancing, who had a graceful form, whose form was (fair) like the cow's milk, who was young and had three eyes, who held everything, who caused joy, said to his sons:

Śivā said:

17-18. O son, I am pleased (with you). Ask for a boon as desired (by you).

Then the son said to the father: "Give this boon to me: O auspicious one, let the worship intended for me be yours. You should always remain in me; you, the immutable one, are me only."

Śiva said:

19-20. O magnanimous one, this will happen; there is no doubt. These two reddish and fair, Brahmā and Viṣṇu are my

two sons. They are the fine soft hair of the armpits, they have my form and are innocent.

Then he said to Brahmā: "You resort to (i.e. take) this one quality."

Brahmā said:

21-22a. O lord, I am not able to hold the quality indicated by you. O god, I shall sustain the Rajas (quality); let Hari resort to the Sattva (quality). This god will hold the remaining quality.

Śambhu said:

22b-24. After having taken the qualities, those gods were not able always to hold them. For being able to sustain (them) they again said to Śiva (i.e. the lord): "We are not able to hold these qualities for all the time. O lord if you are the giver of boons, (then) give us the capacity (to hold them)." Then hearing their words, Śiva said (these) words.

Śiva said:

25-28. Of all (powers), the power of knowledge (alone) is called power. Vidyā (i.e. knowledge) resorts to the three qualities. Ignorance also resorts to them. Please hold the essence of the three qualities after burning them. You should hold that what would be (remaining) there.

Then his son said (these) words: "There cannot be burning without fire." Śiva said: "Fire certainly exists in the eye of Śaṅkara. These three qualities are the cow; and knowledge would be (i.e. is) the auspicious cowdung. Upaniṣad is said to be the urine (of the cow). Then one should prepare the sacred ash from them.

29-30a. One should consecrate the cow; the dung of her whose calves are dead, with the hymn *Āgāvaḥ*. (Uttering the hymn) one should make the cow eat the grass and drink the water with the hymn *Gāvo gāvo gāvaḥ*.

30b-34a. Or the one who observes the vow, should observe a fast on the fourteenth day of the bright and the dark fortnights. Then the next day one should get up in the morning and being

pure and composed and having bathed, having put on garments that are washed, should go to the cow for the dung. Having carefully got her up, one should get the urine from the cow. One should hold it in a pitcher made of gold, silver, copper or clay; or (one should hold it) in a blue lotus, or a vessel made of palāśa(-leaves) or in a horn. One should have the cow-urine and a little cowdung also. One should take in an excellent pot as told before, without letting it fall on the ground.

34b-35a. The wise one should purify the cowdung with the hymn *Śrīḥ me bhajatu* ('May prosperity resort to me'). With the hymn *Alakṣmīrmayi* ('Prosperity should not come to me'). one should purify the cowdung.

35b. With the hymn *Saṁ tvā siñcāmi* ('I sprinkle you'), he should put the cow-urine into the cowdung.

36-38a. With the hymn *Pañcānāṁ tvā* one should prepare fourteen piṇḍas. Having dried them with the rays of the sun, one should put the balls of the cowdung in the vessel already referred to. According to the rule in his own Gṛhya (Sūtra), he should install them and kindle fire. Then one should put balls (saying) 'to Arṇadeva'.

38b-39a. The wise one should perform the two rites called *Āghāra* (i.e. sprinkling clarified butter upon fire) and *Ājyabhāga* (offering two portions of clarified butter to Agni and Soma). Then he should make offerings to the lord of destruction. Then thirteen offerings like Jaya etc. should be made.

39b-42. Then five hymns like *Namo Hiraṇyabāhave* (should be recited). Thus having made all offerings ending with the fourth with the accompaniment of hymns, he should offer (an oblation) to Rudra, Śarva with the hymn *Yasya vai kaṅkati*. A wise man should offer with these the three that are known. Having made the Vyāhṛtis (i.e. uttering the words like Bhūr, Bhuvas etc.), he should offer the right sacrifice (to Agni). Then having withheld the remaining fuel, he should add other water to the water in the full vessel with the Yajus formula *Pūrṇam-āsānta*.

43-47a. He should sprinkle that water on his head with the hymn *Brāhmaṇeṣu amṛtam*. Then with the hymn *Prācyām* he should sprinkle the water in the directions. He should give a present to a brāhmaṇa. He should bring a ball of boiled rice.

With the hymn 'For the protection of the rite of all gods, I shall bring this to you, O fire; cover this one of mine today', he should cover the fire with that ball. The covering by it is said to be remaining in fire for three days. He should feed the brāhmaṇas, and being restrained in speech, should himself eat. If he desires more sacred ash, he should bring more cowdung.

47b-50a. After three days or one day, on the third or fourth day, he, having bathed in the morning, having put on white garments, having worn a white sacred thread, having put on white flowers and unguents, with his teeth (brushed) white, (his body) besmeared with the sacred ash, with the utterance of the hymn *Tad vā* should, indeed, not give up the sacred ash. Having offered presents, he should observe the sixteen formalities like invocation.

50b-55. Then he should collect the fire. With (the utterance of) the hymn *Agne, bhasma*, he should take the sacred ash produced (from the cowdung). Then, he should clean it with (the utterance of) the hymn *Agnirasmi* ('I am fire'), then mix it with the water of Gaṅgā or the milk of a cow. Then having powdered camphor, Kāśmīra-saffron, uśīra, sandal with agaru (a kind of sandal) well, he should drop that powder into the sacred ash with sacred hymn (i.e. syllable) *Om*. Then the hymn (that is said i.e. prescribed) at the time of sprinkling the milk is: 'O goddess, your sacred milk, giving intelligence, is nectar here (i.e. on the earth); due to your favour men are freed from all sins'. Then the learned one should invoke the small lumps of the sacred ash with the utterance of *Om*. With (the utterance of) the hymn, *Aṇoraṇīyān* the wise one (should do so).

Śambhu said:

56-61. Having thus procured the sacred ash and having taken it (in his hands), the knower of the hymns should clean it with *Om* and should get it hallowed with seven hymns. (He should apply it) to his head with (a hymn addressed) to Īśāna. (He should apply it) to his face with (the hymn) *Tat Puruṣa*. He should hallow the chest with the *Aghora* (hymn) and, the private parts with the *Vāma* (hymn), the feet with the *Sadyojāta* hymn, and the entire body with *Om*. Then he should dust

the entire body from the soles of his feet to his head (with sacred ash). Then he should sip water, and should put on a white, washed garment. Having sipped water again, he should do his rites fully. Then having taken the sacred ash and cleaned it with (the utterance of) *Om*, he should, recollecting (Śiva) the three-eyed one, the support of the three qualities, the creator of the three (Vedas) and the mighty one, with the hymn *Namaḥ Śivāya*, put the mark consisting of three lines on his forehead.

62-64a. Saying (the hymn) *Namaḥ Śivābhyām*, he should also put the mark consisting of three lines on both his arms. Saying (the hymn) *Aghorāya namaḥ* he should put (a similar mark) on both his forearms. Then (uttering the hymn) *Bhīmāya* he (should put the mark consisting of three lines) on his back, and the backside of his head. (Saying) 'salutation to Nīlakaṇṭha, the soul of all' he should put it on his head. Then having washed both his hands, he should perform (the proper) rites.

Śiva said:

64b-65a. Having, in this way, prepared and applied the sacred ash, you will be able to sustain the (three) qualities, and then create the beings.

Śambhu said:

65b-70. The gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara, thus addressed by (Śiva) did like that according to the (proper) rule, and vied with each other, being unable to recognise one another, they saluted and said to Śiva: "Who should sustain which quality?" Then Śiva said to his sons: "Due to the (particles of) dust the power of doing rites and knowledge also perish. Brahmā is seen to have a short life. He lives (longer) due to hymns. I was formerly decorated with the rows of 'Brahmā's eggs'. Having rested upon the Rajas quality, you are not recognising me.

71-78a. Viṣṇu has more power than Brahmā, and has also longer life than Brahmā in sustaining the row of 'Brahmā's eggs'. The life of Viṣṇu is said to be of the measure of four inhalings of Maheśa and me. May that Viṣṇu support you due to his having more of the Sattva (quality) than Brahmā (has). He knows me the entire time, and would not forget me. His only

worship is Sāttvikā, and neither Rājasī nor Tāmasī. Salutation to the Tranquil, Auspicious, of the Sattva quality; his possession of the Rajas quality is to be inferred. Salutation to Nīla, so the (Tamas) quality. Śambhu resorted to (it) like that. Formerly, he indeed possessed Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Therefore, worship of three kinds is laid down (in the case) of Śiva. Rajas, conjoined with Tamas is said to be awful. Śiva's worship, even more awful than that is regarded as giving a good course (i.e. salvation); and Rajas conjoined with Tamas is capable of propagating the sacred precepts. The worship even more interrupted than that is said to give fruit. Tamas mixed with Sattva promotes a mixture. A mixed worship of Śiva, causing the good of the world, is fruitless. This way or that way (but) worship of the lord should be regularly done. (The worship) of Śaṅkara in whatever way is said to give a quick fruit to a man."

Śambhu said:

78b-79. In brief this rule about the application of the sacred ash is told, O sinless one. It destroys all the sins of the speaker and the listeners.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINE

Jābāli Recommends Phallus Worship to the Brāhmaṇa Ikṣvāku

Śambhu said:

1-5a. In this regard I shall tell you a story which destroys sins and hearing which the pious one (i.e. Ikṣvāku) obtained excellent devotion. (There was) the best brāhmaṇa, Ikṣvāku by name. He was very learned, very intelligent, proficient in many sacred precepts and well-versed in the science of ethics. He did not perform a sacrifice; he did not give (in charity); he did not worship deities. He did not teach the Vedas, nor did he explain the sacred texts; so also (he did not teach) the Purāṇas, history, the sacred texts or the Vedas. With difficulty he could (get food to) eat and proceeded only with the

embellishment of his body. The life (of the span) of a lakh of years of that brāhmaṇa of that type passed.

5b-10. In the next (span of a) lakh, at night on the third day of the fifth month in (i.e. of) a year he heard this Purāṇa (text): "He, who has not given in charity the wealth earned by him, is certainly roasted for those many years in hell, (for the wealth) being enjoyed day-by-day would become (i.e. becomes) depleted. Then having gone through a thousand existences of insects etc., he then is (born) as a poor man suffering from diseases, having no relatives, having a wicked wife and many children. Every day he lives by begging and supplicating. He leads his life by asking for broken seeds (not capable of growing), or the life among servants (of a man) having no ears, no eyes and with dirt falling (from his body)."

11-13. Having heard the Purāṇa (text) like this, that Ikṣvāku became extremely afflicted. The mean brāhmaṇa repeatedly thought in his mind (like) this: 'Even Durgā, having flowers and beauty is void of fruit due to her having a buffalo. In the same way, knowledge without the Purāṇas would not show the (right) path. A man, (even) after studying many sacred texts, and Vedas with (all) their expanse, does not get proper knowledge unless he has studied the Puraṇas.'

Śambhu said:

14. When he was thinking like this he met with an untimely death. He then went to Yama's world, and was (thus) addressed by Yama.

Yama said:

15-19. You are having many sins. You have not secured great religious merit by teaching the Vedas. Sin (alone) is known to you. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, you will remain in hell for a crore of years. You have a very short span of life. Go back to your former body (i.e. existence). O brāhmaṇa, do religious deeds that are beneficial like giving in charity, worshipping the deities, and repeating hymns; so also teach (Vedas) along with their limbs (i.e. the Vedāṅgas), and apply sacred ash. Worship God Viśveśvara, the god of gods and the lord of Umā. Merely by his perseverance you will not go to my world, O sinner, every day

listen to a little (i.e. small portion of) Purāṇa with respect. Then merely by listening to it, you will not see (i.e. experience) the pangs inflicted by Yama (i.e. me).

20-22. Hearing the words of Yama, the brāhmaṇa went back to (i.e. took up) his own (i.e. former) body. Then that brāhmaṇa made efforts to worship the lord. He went to the sage Jābāli, the worshipper of Śiva, who was endowed with penance and self-study, who discussed the sacred texts and the codes of law, who knew the truth about the Purāṇas, who was surrounded by a lakh of disciples, whose entire body had become loose due to old age, who had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas.

23-36. Desiring to see him he (i.e. Ikṣvāku) went to the Mandara (mountain) which had beautiful caves, which was crowded with many blossoming creepers full of various kinds of birds, which possesed flowers of all seasons, which was adorned with various fragrances, whose big caves were full of the songs (sung) by kinnara couples, the trees in which were resorted to by many beautiful, charming women, the lovely ones, suspending themselves from them, which was resounding with the (hummings of) bees made to rouse them who had slept due to the fatigue caused by love-sports, in which the cuckoos also cooed very much, indeed to unite the separated (lovers), which was crowded with hosts of various sages, where calm (i.e. undisturbed) deer were moving, which was crowded with the bevies of the celestial nymphs, which was resorted to by the groups of gandharvas, the interior of the forest of which was full of the songs produced from the mouths of many siddhas, which was full of lovely fruits, and which had many temples, which was thronged with hundreds of palaces, which had many houses, which was adorned with fierce and angry lords of attendants that had faces like those of lions, like those of elephants, like those of wolves, or having different or strange faces, (or) that had half faces, (or) had half-curved faces, (or) had faces like those of the female deer, (or that) had the faces like those of the creatures like the ruru deer, or like those of alligators, bears and monkeys, that had faces like those of tigers, scorpions, bears, camels, dogs and donkeys, that had faces like those of all the beings, that had faces like creepers, like trees, curved like

rocks and (made) of iron, that had superior bodies, faulty bodies, that had matted hair, that had tufts of hair on their heads, or that were clean-shaved, that had faces like those of birds, that had twelve faces, that had three-figured faces, that had faces like bells, that had faces, ears, or feet like winnowing baskets, that had face like bells or like flutes or like small bells, that had iron-faces like whatever (i.e. all) things in the world; (it was adorned with) certain (attendants) that had put down the charm and beauty of Cupid with their tender faces, that resembled a crore of suns, and that had lustre like those of a crore of moons, that had many colours, that had all (kinds of) faces, that had all forms and four faces, that hand two faces, five faces, three faces or even six faces, that had one or many faces, that were tranquil and were always happy.

37-44a. The mountain Mandara was resorted to by (beings) that were affluent with many enjoyments, and that resembled Rati and Cupid, that had faces like those of Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu, and had bodies like those of Umā (i.e. Pārvatī) and Śiva. It was also resorted to by others having various forms. There the cows were the Vedas, having the calves in the form of Mīmāṁsā; Dharma and others were bodily (present); Purāṇas (presented themselves) with (i.e. in) deeds; there were all the Codes of Law and (all) Histories; there were Vedas embodied; they stayed on the Mandara (mountain); the mountain destroyed sins. In its midst (i.e. on it, there was) a very auspicious and extremely beautiful city. It was decorated with wells, lakes, groves and hundreds of palaces. It had seven ramparts, trenches, and jewelled upper stories. It had nine town-gates, and beautiful houses. Its lustre is matchless, and it is without heat and cold. In it is an auspicious seat, beautified with the feet of Vedas.

44b-48a. The very beautiful foot-stool is prepared with all the Upaniṣads. To the two auspicious feet are (attached) Purāṇas and Vedas for auspiciousness. A great meditating saint is seated there. His figure is (fair) like cow's milk. His charming face has a gentle smile on it. The lord's age is sixteen years. On his chest he has a rosary made of gems and rudrākṣa. He having the lustre of a karṇikāra (flower) wears a sacred thread. The god has (put on) good, jewelled ear-rings. He has put on a crown and

golden garments. He has (put on) many ornaments, and has applied sandal of various kinds.

48b-54. On his left lap Pārvatī is seated, and he is looking at her face. The god embraces with his left arm the innocent, young goddess of a beautiful face adorned with fresh youth, decorated, beautiful in all limbs, and having a golden lotus, and raises her face with his right hand. With his left hand the god touches her head, and puts a mark (on it) with his right hand. With the fan of Oṁkāra Bhakti (i.e. Devotion) fans the gods. The charming Pūjā (i.e. worship) gives a garland with (i.e. of) flowers to the god. Jñapti (i.e. Cognition) and Virakti (i.e. Detachment)—the two ladies—hold the chowries in the form of abstract meditation. Samādhi (i.e. profound Meditation) works for him and Dhāraṇā (i.e. steady Abstraction of mind) is his wife. Checks and Restraints are said to be his servants. Prāṇāyāma (i.e. Suspending the breath) is his family-priest, and Pratyāhāra (i.e. Withdrawing the senses) is the holder of (the staff of) gold. Dhyāna (i.e. Meditation) is the superintendent of his wealth, so also Satya (i.e. Truth) is the general of his army. From Brahmā to an insect all are the animals and Śiva is their lord.

55-62a. Dharma is the guardian of the animals, and Adharma (i.e. Unrighteousness) is a thief. They (i.e. the animals) are bound by the noose of illusion. Death at Kāśī is the liberator; and women of various sorts (serve) the god of gods, the lord of Umā (i.e. Pārvatī). A crore of beings would remember (i.e. remember) the lord of Umā who is like this. Having obtained desired pleasures they are honoured in Śiva's heaven. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, great Indra are the door-keepers of his city. The two goddesses Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī are appointed to worship the threshold etc. on the ground. Gods and celestial women are the servants of the god of gods. All gods are the servants of the noble one. Ikṣvāku saw such a great mountain. Having saluted the sage Jābāli, he said these words: "O sage, I desire to go to the mountain. Are you capable of doing this (i.e. taking me there) or not? Formerly the wise Yama told me about the short (span of) my life. He told me (that I would stay in) many hells. How can there be absolution (for me)?"

Jābāli said:

62b-66a. By means of my divine eye I too knew all this about you. O brāhmaṇa, your life is (i.e. you will live) for ten (more) days. Though a learned man, you did not practise acts of piety. Due to lack of repeated practice, you have not practised penance. Due to the time being short you (have) not (practised) abstract meditation. You have not given gifts due to absence of wealth. You did not go through worship due to lack of capacity. You did not perform sacrifices. You did not do acts of pious liberality. (Therefore) you, having no life (i.e. having a short life), have no religious merit (to your credit). Due to (your) going against the time you did not resort to teaching or to holy places. So, to destroy that sin, no expiation is laid down; so also no religious practice leading to salvatation is laid down. (Hence,) O sage, stay (here) or go (back).

Ikṣvāku said:

66b-69a. O brāhmaṇa, by means of the religious practice which is performed after taking a pledge throughout life, the destruction of sins definitely takes place. Tell me about those religious practices by means of which my sin will perish; so also (tell me) due to which religious merit I shall go to heaven. O brāhmaṇa sage, be the refuge of me who am extremely afraid of hell. They say that looking after him who has sought one's refuge, is the fruit of all religious practices.

Jābālī said:

69b-70. It is true that within a short time religious merit like that cannot be obtained. As long as falsehood has not ceased, it is possible to speak like that in dreams. There is a secret. It is not spoken (out) to anyone.

Ikṣvāku said:

71a. O sage, protect me who have sought your refuge. My time will pass out.

Jābāli said:

71b-75a. O brāhmaṇa, the secret enjoined by the sacred texts is greater (i.e. more valuable) than my life. (It is) the

worship of Śiva's Phallus. It was practised by Brahmā and others. It destroys all sins. It destroys all calamities. It gives enjoyments and salvation. Therefore, perform the worship of Śiva. O sage, one should not violate the auspicious worship of the Phallus of Śiva. He who would disturb Śiva's worship has cut off my head. It is preferable to be thrown on a spike, to be dragged to hell, to give up one's life, but never violation of (Śiva's) worship.

75b-83a. It is better to fall into fire, to bow down the head, to eat one's own feces, but not the violation of Śiva's worship. The food of him, the mean man, who eats without worshipping the lord, or if he enjoys or eats without uttering Śiva's name, is said to be of sins of the form of food. The crores of the great sins of him who has in his words (i.e. on his tongue) the auspicious name *Śiva* are quickly reduced to ash. The man who goes round (the Phallus of) Śiva (keeping it to) the right and salutes him, would get the same religious merit which one would get by going round the earth. Having gone round (the Phallus) three times and saluted five times, and having again gone round (it) and saluted (it), one would be free from sins. He who would make or cause to make (the sound of) musical instruments in Śiva's temple, is endowed with great power and is born as one who resorts to the Vedas. He who would make the three-eyed god, the god of gods, hear the Purāṇas (i.e. would recite Purāṇas before him), would, being free from all sins and being blessed, live in Śiva's city. The god always speaks to him sweet words with regard.

Jābāli said:

83b-90. This excellent worship of Śiva has been told (to you) in brief. O brāhmaṇa, you are short-lived (i.e. the span of your life is short). Perform the worship of Śiva. Thrice, twice or even once (a day), for a watch, perform Śiva's worship. Resorting to the stage of a recluse, resorting to a recluse, worship Śiva with the flowers of a recluse in the morning. A man should worship Śiva with coconut, lotuses, saugandhikas, nīpa-flowers, japā-flowers, punnāgas, karavīras pāṭalas, tulasī, arkas, aparājitā, apamārgas, rudrajātadamana, with all these and with fruits and bilva leaves and dhūrtakas, droṇa-flowers, abundant śirīṣa flowers, dūrvā, korakas, nandyāvartas, sacred rice grains or

mixed with sesamum only, or with other (materials of worship) according to his capacity. The worship of Śiva is also (done) with karṇikāra flowers and a golden dūrvā.

91-98a. He should not worship Śiva with buds or campaka flowers, except the lotus. All lotuses, leaves and sacred grains, darbhas and flowers should be kept separately from the silver and golden (flowers etc.). O king, cake cooked in oil would not be said to be stale. That which is with fruits and with acid and sour substances or with cumin-seeds should be sprinkled with water. (All) that, viz. roots, fruits, vegetables etc. sprinkled with water is not said to be stale. All that water, viz. water of a great river, water (flowing) from a mountain, or water in the form of a pool (i.e. in a pool), or well-water, or the water that would be (available) from a tank, a lake, well is holy water. It would not be stale. Water should not be procured at night. He should procure it by day. Water with sand (i.e. from a sandy place) should also be taken; for it is not stale. Knowing like this, you offer a worship to Śiva's Phallus.

Śambhu said:

98b-100. That Ikṣvāku dear to brāhmaṇas (or to whom brāhmṇas were dear), thus addressed by the sage, became engrossed in Śiva's worship (and) remained (in doing the worship) for eight days. When the ninth day arrived, he performed (Śiva's) worship in the morning. When the time of his death came, he, having performed Śiva's worship, offered his life as a present to the great lord (Śiva).

101-109a. Knowing him to be dead, Yama's messengers who took (the dead) to Yama's world came (there) and made efforts (to take him). Śiva's messengers, like Vahnimukha, also came there. Among them there was a dispute: 'This is mine, this is mine.' Then, a messenger of Yama, with a noose in his hand hurt a messenger of Śiva. Then Vahnimukha got angry, and becoming of (i.e. turning himself into) a great body, seized a hundred messengers of Yama with one hand and squeezing their heads with another, cut them off like young grass. Then killing the messengers and taking Ikṣvāku (with him) he went (to Vīrabhadra). He presented him to the intelligent Vīrabhadra. He too (presented) him to Śiva. Then the great god said to him: "Every

day for eight days, you offered a worship. Formerly you had censured me saying 'Śiva's Phallus is (just) the tip of a penis.' Therefore, you will be one with a penis-like mouth. On its tip there will be a round hole. You will be without a tongue, a nose etc. (But) because of your having uttered my name formerly, you will be a speaker (also)." Due to the words of the lord he became like that in a moment.

Śambhu said:

109b-112. He who will every day listen to this excellent old account, will, being free from the bond of sins, become Śiva's devotee. He would go to Śiva's place and would also be a speaker. He who tells this story, would be like Śiva. Formerly a king named Adhīra, having told this story, went, though he had committed a sin, to heaven with his wife.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TEN

How a King Became Śiva's Attendant Agniśikha

Śrī Rāma said:

1. Tell me, how this fire named Agniśikha became an attendant of Śiva like that. Salutation to you.

Śambhu said:

2-9a. Formerly he was a kṣatriya who was always angry. He had lost his wife, his army and his country. (Therefore) he was extremely afflicted. Having got a couple of buffaloes, he practised agriculture with his sons. He was full of (i.e. had incurred) a great debt, and so was very much unhappy. The king was also unhappy on account of his son being killed by (the bite of) a serpent. The king, though like that, also gave up agriculture. He also abandoned his two sons, and having given up food, wept. Then the two sons came to the father, and said these (words) to him: "O father, why do you weep? What has

gone does not come (back) by weeping excessively. Your lamentation today will (only) lead to the parching up of your body. Due to the grief your eyes have been impaired; so also your throat has been impaired. Similarly your practice of religious rites has been harmed. (Then) why do you torment (yourself)? One that has gone does not come (back). Protect the five breaths that have remained (with you). It is meritorious to protect many, especially those that have resorted to (a person). How do you grieve over this enemy who has resorted to someone else?"

The father said:

9b-10a. O sons, how (do you say that) a son is an enemy? Then you are also my enemies. How do you call an extremely happy son as an enemy?

The two sons said:

10b-21a. The son, as soon as he is born, would snatch away (the father's) wife. When he is growing he would take away (the father's) wealth. When he dies, he (would take away the father's) life. In what way is enmity different from this? I tell you, O king, that which you described as happiness is all resulting in unhappiness. At the time of the birth of a son, there is a thought about the death of the wife. And if the wife survives, then he (i.e. the husband) loses his happiness. When the vulva has become impure, no union is possible. If he becomes intent on embracing her, his body gets covered with milk (coming out of her breasts). Even then if the union takes place, the heart of the woman necessarily goes to the child due to the child's weeping (i.e. when the child weeps). Then he (i.e. the man) loses interest. Then, if the child falls into (i.e. comes between) the couple that is united, then there is loss of joy. When the union is disrupted, the displeasure is great. When everything is limited by time, there is a possibility of union (only) on some occasion. At that time there is no food, no water, (no union) with his wife. Due to the trouble caused by Planets such as diseases and thirst etc., there is great pain in protecting children. That beautiful pleasure of getting on the father's

lap, embracing and kissing him, speaking very sweet words—(all) this which is regarded as a pleasure does not deserve (i.e. is not equal to) the sixteenth part of discontinuance of coitus. In (i.e. due to) a son, there are other thousands of sorrows. What will you do with him who will oppose you in this world and in the next? Therefore, give up this grief. We two, your sons, are here.

The king said:

21b-25a. I shall give up the grief which is difficult to check and which goes against (i.e. impedes) all acts. O my sons, in this world and the next one should accomplish one's well-being. I shall go to Vasiṣṭha, my priest and the foremost and great preceptor and the best sage. He will give (i.e. show) me the (proper) way.

Speaking thus, he went to his preceptor, the brāhmaṇa living in Vārāṇasī. He saluted him (prostrating before him) like a staff. He was honoured by the sage, was embraced by him, was smelt on his head, and was offered a seat; and was thus addressed: "What for have you come? What should I do for you?"

The king said:

25b-26a. O brāhmaṇa, give (i.e. show) me the way to cross this worldly existence. I am always unhappy with my fate. (Therefore) I have sought your refuge.

Vasiṣṭha said:

26b-32a. It comes to this: take recourse to the lord of the universe (in the form of) the great Phallus. O lord of kings, worship the god of gods, the trident-holder, propitiating whom, formerly, the sage Śakti, the son of Arundhatī, though devoured by a demon, did not go to Yama's world. For a short time he went to heaven, and then went to Brahmā's heaven. My son (i.e. Śakti), (having gone to Viṣṇu's heaven) from Brahmā's world, is sporting in Viṣṇu's heaven. O great king, (also) see this hunter, moving in the forest, and worshipping the lord of the universe, merely with leaves of the śamī-tree collected by himself, with

the flowers of pūga tree, also with the kadamba-flowers and with flowers of the jasmine (creeper). See him worshipping the great lord with these and other (materials). It is a wonder that he will die merely after half a watch from now.

32b-41. When his time of death came, the hunter saw, for offering a present to Śiva, by his side a jar full of mangoes, but censurable due to the fruits being left over (after some of them were eaten) by a dog. Due to the absence of an offering as planned by him, the hunter uttered these auspicious words suggesting the devotion of people: "The sage Jamadagni offered his eye in the absence of flowers, his finger in the absence of fruits, and his soul when the Phallus was falling, and cut asunder his body and offered it when the seat of the Phallus was broken. Other devotees of Śiva have also performed great rash acts. I too have to do like that. Otherwise I shall incur a sin." In the meanwhile a mad man came to Śiva. Having snatched the (materials of) worship performed by the hunter, he, in a moment, ate it up. He also vomitted on the seat of Śiva. Then the hunter thought: 'Should I or should I not kill this one harming Śiva?' Then that devotee of Śiva strove to kill himself. (He said to himself:) 'As this mad man has eaten up the (materials of) worship that I had offered to Śiva, when the Phallus was covered, I must also quickly remove the covering of my body—my skin. This is for making (the materials of) the worship free. One should abandon one's throat due to the loss of the fruit (of the worship)'.

42-52a. Deciding like this, he, with a sharp axe, did a wonder: He cut off the skin (on) his right leg, and below the waist. He also quickly cut off the skin on the left leg up to the waist. Being delighted and trembling, he also cut off the skin about it (i.e. the waist). The hunter who was delighted, also cut off the skin on the hands, shoulders, chest, and throat and also the skin on the head. Then between the two he cut off the body in a circular way, and having cut off his finger and taking it, he offered his skin to the god. Then the devotee of Śaṅkara, of a divine form, of good eyes, having four hands, having many ornaments (on his person), quickly stood in the sky. Then hundreds of thousands messengers of Śiva, having beautiful

crowns, and decorated with all ornaments, having tridents in their hands, all resembling pure crystal, having four arms, of lovely forms, seated in excellent aeroplanes, all resembling the sun, tranquil, accompanied by their beloveds resembling Rambhā, and followed by sons, wives and army, and hundreds of energetic and amorous women resembling the sun in lustre, showered flowers. And the hunter was called by them; but he did not go (to them), and said to them: "Would I or would I not go with my wife and kinsmen?" The followers of Śiva having heard these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, said these (words) to him: "The fruit is to be had by him (only) who has done a virtuous or a sinful act."

The hunter said:

52b-55. Of practices that are impure, the author is (but) one; but of the practices done in honour of Śiva, the fruit (would go to) two or many.

In the meanwhile, Vīrabhadra arrived (there) with a hundred children and many crores of attendants. (He said to the hunter:) "O hunter, come along with your kinsmen. As you said, (you may come) along with your wife, relatives and kinsmen; and having got into this aeroplane, go to Śiva. Well-being to you." Then due to those words, he, having got into the aeroplane, reached Śiva's heaven.

Vasiṣṭha said:

56-60a. You have observed all (this). Perform the worship of the lord. Being free from the bond of sin, you will go to Śiva's heaven. O king, if you long for kingdom, worship the lord of attendants; and besmear (the ground) with water and cowdung every day. By (doing) this much, you will certainly get the kingdom of the earth. As long as you live you will have (i.e. enjoy) the kingdom, and in the end you will go to Śiva's position. You will not get the kingdom during this (existence); but (will get it) after death (i.e. in the next existence). Therefore, after having got another body (i.e. existence), you will have due to the prowess of your service to Śiva, the kingdom, and your devotion to Śiva will be stable.

Śambhu said:

60b-70a. Then, having performed the worship like that, he died and went to heaven. Then he again got the birth of (i.e. was born as) a king, and, being devoted to Śiva, he ruled his kingdom. Once the king went to Śiva's temple, which was having many lamps, like the lord of serpents having gems. There was also the crowd of warriors. One lamp fell on the king. Then the king got angry, and quickly taking the lamp, angrily dropped it in the charming temple. The abode of the god (i.e. the temple) was burnt, and sin came (to him). Then the king again fashioned the temple etc. that was burnt and got Śiva worshipped. Then when the day of his death came, the king who had propitiated Śaṅkara, who had applied sacred ash and who lay in sacred ash, died while muttering (the hymn sacred to) Rudra. He went to Śiva's heaven. Vīrabhadra (thus) spoke to him: "You become best of the attendants, (and) my servant. On my order bring the devotees of Śiva in my proximity (i.e. to me). You will be without a head, and flames will be coming out of your mouth." He then said to Vīrabhadra, the noble chief of the attendants (of Śiva): "How would action be possible for me without eyes, ears, and the group of tongue, nose, mouth and head?"

Vīrabhadra said:

70b-75. The beautiful woman who was formerly accepted by you yourself, every day serves the auspicious bull-bannered god (i.e. Śiva) by arranging an auspicious river, an auspicious eddy etc.; by arranging white and blue lotuses, and also a fan and a chowrie. (She also arranges) a trident, a conch, a disc, a mace and a bow. Also a trident, a drum, a sword, a bull and the auspicious (attendant) Bhṛṅgiriṭi. So also other (objects) like an eight-petalled lotus, a mystical diagram etc. Once that prostitute was present in the temple of the deity. A certain jail official of the king entered the temple of the deity. He saw her there, and said these words:

The official said:

76-78. The prostitute is in a secluded part (i.e. alone). I am young, and not old. A woman would abandon a man who is

old, diseased, impotent, weak and poor, whose penis is short and who is helpless. A woman should avoid from a distance a man who has no moustache, who is covered with dirt, who is dull, and is defiled with a bad odour, who is small and has no addiction. Therefore, O prostitute, let me cohabit with you. Quickly restore me to life.

The prostitute said:

79-80. We hear that for women of all castes loyalty to their husbands is a great duty that gives them happiness in this world and the next. A prostitute, when in the charge of a man, does not unite with any other man. She (then) is known as a chaste woman. Therefore she should keep him (only).

The official said:

81-94. If this is so, there is no doubt that (your) death will soon take place.

Then going to the king, he said these (words:): "A prostitute is (just) a prostitute. She is not a wife. It is not proper (i.e. necessary) to say this." Speaking thus to the king, he took some froth from a hollow lotus stalk from a well, and went to her house. Seeing it was time for (her to) sleep, he extended his hand, and in the hole of her garment, the wicked-minded one put the froth there. Having done like this, and going to the king he said these (words) to the king: "O king, having gone out (of your palace) go to the prostitute, the woman (you love). Having got that prostitute up, please observe her entire body, and loosening the knot of the garment, observe it carefully." The king went to the house, and said these words to the official: "She is asleep. See her. I (now) go. You see (this)." But he then said to the king: "O king, this is not proper for you. Arrange to see her mother or father. When they are seen, all this will quickly be clear." Then the king brought her mother, and made her see (the garment). At the words of the king, she made a search of the garment. Seeing the froth there, the mother rubbed it. The garment became wet due to the rubbing. The king said: "What is it?" The mother of the prostitute said: "There is nothing, O lord, there is nothing." (Thus she told it)

with many words. The king observed the garment with a doubt. He said: "The garment is wet with semen. See it." Then the men who were near there, said to the king: "It is like that." Then the king went home, and said to the chief magistrate: "Now only, without thinking, cut off the head of the prostitute. Within a ghaṭikā (i.e. a period of twentyfour minutes) her head should be shown to me." The chief magistrate also did like that at the words of the king, and showed (it to him).

Vīrabhadra said:

95-96a. Thus you did formerly; (and) today you have got the fruit. With flame only (in your mouth) you will speak, hear, see and smell. You will know the taste; you will be intelligent and very wrathful.

Śambhu said:

96b-98. Thus the intolerant king has become Śiva's follower (named) Jvālāmukhī. Therefore, one who desires happiness in this world and the next, should be tolerant. He who would every day listen to this excellent account, will, being free from the bond of sin, be (i.e. live) in Śiva's heaven.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ELEVEN

The Sinner Vidhṛta Goes to Śiva's Abode

Śrī Rāma said:

1-2. O preceptor, tell me the importance of the name of the great lord, the importance of worship, of salutation, so also the greatness of sight, the importance of giving water, so also the importance of offering incense, so also of lamp and sandal, O best one.

Śambhu said:

3-8. It is not possible (to describe) in detail the importance of each of the names. I shall tell (it) to you in brief. O Rāma,

listen carefully. Formerly in the Tretā age, there was a powerful king by name Vidhṛta. When his father died, he, even though a child, was consecrated (as the king) on the kingdom. He kept near him all those of his age. He did not like those who were old and learned. He liked the young men who were wicked, who did acts which ought not to be done, who were adept in bringing beautiful women (to the king) and were skilled in acts of stealing. He liked those who were engaged in buffoonery, and who were skilled in dancing. Those who knew the charms of subjugation, also those who knew (the use of) herbs, who were given to singing and dancing, who were rogues, and who knew gambling, were dear to him. That king deserted those who did what his father liked.

9-14. Having had consultations with those wicked ones, he did his acts. He joined these and other wicked (men). Depending upon the words of these (wicked men), he abandoned the advice of the wise. Those who put their fists on the chests and who howled, who knew the essential things about the characteristics of the pudendum muliebre (i.e. the private parts of women), and who were proficient in the technique of sexual enjoyment, were dear to him. That kingdom then became bereft of political wisdom. As elephants, horses, chariots, camels, goats, cows, buffaloes etc. were taken away from here and there, all of them perished. At that time no gems other than the land were seen in that city. He (i.e. Vidhṛta) being vanquished by another king, fled. Having gone to a great forest, he made a mountain the inaccessible place (for his enemies). There, with a few followers, he resorted to the way of life of a thief.

15-21. Having, at various places, shown to thieves and cheats by disposition gold, garments, corn etc. and gems, sandal etc., he made them bind (the possessors) in order to take away their wealth. When he did not get food, he prepared food with the flesh of cows and buffaloes. If he did not get food, he got prepared the meal with the flesh of horses and human beings. Such was his conduct, bereft of offering the prayers (thrice a day) etc. He had only one minister, a demon by name Surāpa. He always ordered him, 'bring, strike,' He, the abode of cruelty and surrounded by a thousand men, thus followed the opinion of the demon and seized men coming from many countries. Having come to know

about the women liked by him, he abducted them. Having enjoyed them for some time, he ate their flesh. Thus killing men and women he ruled unbearably.

22-28. The mean man thus ruled for a thousand years. Then his body became loose due to old age, and he was deformed due to folds (on his body). The place was without any living being all around (as far as the area of) ten yojanas. Then the day of the death of the noble king(?) came. When the time of his death came, all his followers remained by him, surrounding him who had bathed and lay on the ground. The minister Surāpa said "Order me as to what is to be done." Then the king, weak like that, (almost) dead, was afflicted. His life had become weak below the navel. (So) he uttered (these) words with difficulty: "O lord of demons, for all the time you strike, take away forcibly, snatch away." Saying so, he died. The messengers of Yama came (there). Intent on beating (him) they tried to tie him in a wonderful way. Their bonds and nooses were reduced to powder. Also their weapons and staffs were pounded just by the touch of his body. Such wonder took place.

29-34. Then Death himself came there and bound him with his noose. Seeing even the noose of Death cut off, Mṛtyu thought: 'I have seen the death of all mortals but nowhere like this'. When Death was thinking like this, the brave Jvālāvaktra holding a dart and being ordered by Vīrabhadra, suddenly came there. Then seeing Jvālāvaktra, Death quickly ran (away). Seeing that Death running away, Jvālāmukha, (i.e. Jvālāvaktra), the brave one, (said to him): "O thief, stop, stop. Where are you going? A thief gets freed from his sin only on his being put to the gallows." Speaking thus to Death, he pierced by his dart (the body of) Death. Making the dart pass through his shoulder, and having tied his messengers with a rope, and with their feet tied in chains, he took them and went to the king. Putting him into an excellent aeroplane, well-decorated with songs and musical instruments, he approached Vīra(bhadra). He reported everything to him.

35-41a. Vīrabhadra too, reported all that to Śiva whose form was unlimited, who was being served by many hosts of sages and gods led by Brahmā and Viṣṇu, and who was accompanied by Pārvatī. After saluting Śiva he also reported to him

about Mṛtyu on the spike. The powerful Vīrabhadra, the universal soul, remained silent. Seeing Agnyānana (i.e. Jvālāvaktra), Śiva reproached him (and said to him): "O attendant, how did you do this rash act? How are you not afraid of Death, the superior Yama? Tell me all that truly." Having saluted him, that Vahnimukha (i.e. Jvālāvaktra) who was very angry, seeing Death, danced with joy and said: "(This) Death has just committed a theft. Therefore, I put him on the spike." Śiva too got Death freed and made all his messengers sound.

41b-45. Seeing Death Śiva said: "My name remains with them at the time of their death. I give my heaven only to those who have (i.e. utter) my name with some letters fewer or more. It is true, he uttered the word *Prahara* (i.e. 'strike'). They say that the word *Hara* (i.e. Śiva) having just the word *Pra* added to it, gives (i.e. leads to) the (highest) position. Salute these in the vicinity who are muttering (my name) and tell my words to Yama. Those who offer salutation, have restrain, narrate (the glory of Śiva), wait upon (Śiva), resort to his service, become his servants, recite the sacred texts, recite the hymn (in honour of Śiva) of five letters, or recite the *Śatarudriya* hymn, are not to be considered (by you). He, who (utters) my name, he who wears rudrākṣa (rosary), he who applies sacred ash, he who explains the Purāṇas before me, even if he has (committed) all sins, I rule over him. It is not at all the authority of Yama (to punish them).

46-53. Also those men who, though they have (committed) sins, though they are cheats, though they have used others' garments and have enjoyed others' wives, are intent upon dying at Vārāṇasī, or who die on Śrīśaila, are not to be considered (by Yama). Even lice, gad-flies, bugs, beasts etc., insects and ants, serpents, scorpions, pigs, that die at Kāśī, reach Śaṅkara. O Death, having saluted him who uttering his name, would meditate in the temple of his heart upon Śiva who has three eyes, who is Virūpākṣa (i.e. has an uneven number of eyes), whose eyes are the triad (of the Vedas), who has the moon, the sun and fire as his eyes, get away by my order." Having heard what was said by Śiva, Death praised Śaṅkara: "Salutation to you, the lord of deities; salutation to you, the form of gods; salutation to you, the omniscient one; salutation to you, the lord of

animals." Then god Mahādeva (i.e. Śiva) said to Death: "Choose a boon. I am pleased with this eulogy." Death (then) asked for a boon: "O lord, O Śaṁkara, protect me, a sinner belonging to you." Saying "All right" the lord said to Death: "O child, you (can) go." He too went to Yama's world, and told the entire (account) to Yama.

Śambhu said:

54. He who would every day listen to this auspicious, excellent account, is freed from all sins, and goes near Śaṅkara.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWELVE

The Story of Śoṇa and His Wife Kalā

Śambhu said:

1-5. (Now) I shall also tell you another account of a woman. (I shall tell you) what Devarāta's daughter obtained by the utterance of (Śiva's) name. The young, very beautiful daughter of Devarāta was the wife of the intelligent Śoṇa, the son of Dhanañjaya. The two were restrained, devoted to pious acts alone, and virtuous. When they had gone for a bath in Gaṅgā, they found a treasure. (When they had gone) to bring clay on the bank that had fallen due to the current, they took a clod of clay and saw a great silver pitcher having a stone on it (i.e. covered with a stone). Then Śoṇa said these words to his dear wife: "How should we act? What should we do that would be beneficial to us?"

The wife said:

6-13a. A man should not undertake any work depending upon the view of a woman. A man should not also share a secret dear to him or (of) any (other kind). If a treasure would be noticed in the presence of a woman, then by groups of such words the woman should be deceived. Whatever remains there is not to be seen by us. If it is wealth, it is not to be seen, (for) it

results in suffering. If it is not known by anyone else, wherefrom can definite knowledge be had? If someone is not seen now, he remains hidden. If there is no hiding (i.e. if someone has not hidden himself), then someone remains (here) deceitfully. If it is not a deception on the part of human beings, then Śiva remains here. If it is not Śiva, then a brāhmaṇa (turned into a) demon (after his death) remains here. If he is not that (demon), then it may be the great lore (Mahāvidyā?) of kings. If the king does not know it, then there is a possibility of an affair (done) in a secret manner. (Or) it may be a trouble from thieves. If you are not cautious, then a great peril will take place.

13b-20. Generally, desire for enjoyment is produced in wealthy kings. From one enjoyment desire for another enjoyment (follows), and it destroys the religious rites. If a woman knows about the wealth found through chance, then she becomes free, and through anger divulges (i.e. may divulge) what is found. Due to anger she becomes one having lack of trust (i.e. she is not trusted); then the fault told before (follows). Trust is put in a familiar person; (so also) journey (is undertaken with him), or the mind is fixed on someone else. Various kinds of acts are possible for women due to trust (put in them). (Their) love would go towards any young man on seeing him. Due to love contact takes place; and due to contact sexual union takes place. When sexual union takes place constantly, then another (place of trust) may occur. Formerly you have enjoyed a woman, and now also you are enjoying one. Whom do you long for now or whom do you love? Which clever or very affectionate woman would go to another man than her own? If today you speak the same words as he spoke to her, then I shall tell you all this. Otherwise no words will be uttered (by me).

21-23a. Having gained so much audacity, so also due to change in form, she would behave independently after taking whatever wealth (she can). He, getting her killed, and taking that wealth, will cause her to be thrown. On the death of the husband before (her death) she should not enter fire (with the thought:) 'In my widowhood, all this wealth will be useful for my religious merit.'

23b-33a. Resolving like this with (i.e. in) her mind, when widowhood has come, she, when she gets an itching of the vulva

(i.e. has a desire for sex) by day or at night, she said (i.e. would say), after having gone to a lonely place and after having uncovered (i.e. taken off) her garment, to her vulva these words, through grief, and with her hand on her generative organ: "O vulva, what have you done? What sin have you committed? Or is it the sin of the penis due to having got into you? Or is it the sin of the doer due to avoiding service like me?" Even then when the itch is produced, she would put her finger (into her vulva); and due to the feeling of the itch she would do strange movements after that. Having rubbed it with her hands, having struck it and having expanded it, she, being extremely pained, repeatedly shook her feet. She, after having embraced the (piece of) wood of the cot, and pressed her breasts (against it) as she liked, became sad due to a peculiar disposition of her mind. Or having in the day stayed in the house she would process the vegetable, and having hung it in the house, she, having changed her dress (would stir out) on the highways in the evening, and is enjoyed by any one. Then due to the prowess of her words, she, being unsuspected, would act indecently. Or going to an unknown house, she would certainly make (someone) sport with her. This is what is expected of the wealth that is obtained in the presence of a woman. Therefore, there is no need for you to consult me (in this matter).

Śoṇa said:

33b-39a. It is so. There is no doubt about it. Go and stay away for evacuation of the bowels and passing urine. Remaining (here for some time) I shall go hereafter. When she had gone, Śoṇa also cut his garment into pieces. Then in each piece he took ample wealth. On the sand-bank, he made a hole as deep as the knee, threw the wealth (into it), filled it (with sand) and evacuated his bowels over it; and he put the pitcher, supporting it with the garment somewhere. Doing all this, as if he knew nothing, the sage went for his bath. Then his wife having bathed and having worshipped Pārvatī, when told by her husband to go, the chaste woman went home. Knowing her to be alone, a demon by name Mārīca assumed the form of her husband and said to Kalā:

Mārīca said:

39b-41a. On the bank of Saptagodāvarī there is (a grove) called Drākṣārāma where Bhīma himself had stayed, which gives enjoyments and salvation and which destroys sins merely by being remembered. Let us go there. O beautiful woman, quickly come out.

Kalā said:

41b-42. You who had proceeded to bathe, have not bathed. How do you say this now, which you have not said before? The best ones know the change of nature as a calamity.

Mārīca said:

43-53. Not to go against the husband is said to be the duty of women. Quickly tell me whether you are friendly or hostile to me.

The chaste woman remained silent, and that he was her husband, the young woman went out with him; and the chaste woman went into a forest. (She said to him:) "It is the mid-day. Perform your daily rites." Hearing her words, the demon said: "This is not the place for performing rites. We have to go to that (region) where it is. So we shall go from here." Having gone to some region, and seeing (there) a cave and a lake (he said:) "This is the place for me to stay at; O dear one, I shall bathe (here)." Saying so, he bathed in the lake and ate fruits. When it was the time for (taking) the meal, Kalā meditated upon Umā (and) Śiva. She was engrossed in reflecting upon whether he was or was not her husband. Then ascertaining by means of reflection that he was a thief, she was frightened, was very submissive, and had her face full of (i.e. bedewed with) tears. Saying, "Oh, a hurtful misery has befallen (me)!" she fell down. Seeing her weeping, the demon started to offend her; and (i.e. but) he (was not able) to offend her. When the demon tried to rape her, she made a covering of stone from her knees up to her navel. The demon, having seen her with a stonelike garment (thought): "I shall kill her and eat her up." Saying so and whirling the sword he proceeded to cut off her head. (She said to him:)

54-57. "I am Kalā. My husband, knowing (you) will curse you. Do not snatch me away." When she just uttered these words, the demon cut off her head. When she met with such a bad (i.e. miserable) death, the messengers of Śiva, who had put on lovely ornaments, who had held all (kinds of) weapons, and who were auspicious, came there. Putting her into an aeroplane, they went to Śiva's heaven. Seeing her who had come there, Umā, the daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, honoured her with joy, and spoke (these) words to her who had bent (i.e. fallen) at her feet and who was pure: "I am pleased with your loyalty to your husband. I (shall) give you whatever is desired by you."

Kalā said:

58-61a. Give me the status of your servant. Your lotus-like feet are dear to me. What is the use of many other requests?

Śivā (i.e. Pārvatī) said: "All right." She was honoured by the wives of Indra and others. The sage Śoṇa, the treasure of arts reached his house. Not seeing his wife there, he became engrossed in reflection. Through his eye of wisdom he saw her to have been snatched away by the demon, to be dead, to have reached Śiva's heaven and Umā, and to have been granted a boon by Umā.

61b-66a. The best sage had some affliction for a long time, turned back and went to his father-in-law Devarāta. Having reported everything to him, he went to sage Viśvāmitra with him. He reported it to Vasiṣṭha. Vasiṣṭha also said to those sages: "Having gone to Kailāsa and having first seen god Maheśvara, and then having got permission from Śiva and gone to Pārvatī's abode, we shall request the goddess and tell her everything properly." The excellent sages, saying "All right", went to Śaṅkara's abode, and saluted the god of gods. Being honoured by Vīrabhadra, they informed him this: "The wife of Śoṇa has been kidnapped."

66b-71. Śiva said to the best sages: "I had already known this. Her death is untimely. (Still the span of) her life is a hundred years (more). For those who have met with an untimely death, there is life again. She will give birth to ten sons; she will have

beauty and good fortune also. Ascertaining this, you have come here, O brāhmaṇas. All this is certain about people that have gone to Yama's world. (But) there is no other course for those who have come to my heaven. Formerly, at the time when her vital breath went out of her body (i.e. at the time of her death) she had uttered my name (viz. Hara). By that the writing of Yama was wiped. Then how (can) a decision (be had) about her life? Or you (better) tell the entire (account) to (Pārvatī) the daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain." Then the brāhmaṇas went to see the feet of Pārvatī.

72-75. All of them saluted the mother. Viśvāmitra said these (words): "O mother, having formerly protected the wives who were helpless and forlorn and children who had lost their parents, you have always been one who gave whatever was desired. This Kalā is my grand-daughter only. Having propitiated you, she had obtained this Śoṇa as her husband. This is the fruit of your worship. O Aparṇā (i.e. Pārvatī), I shall get (back) Kalā through penance, or through charity, or through vows and fasts. I desire to eat food served by her. How (can I have it)?"

Pārvatī said:

76. I give the wife as she is desired to be (by her husband). I am unable to part with her. What do you think, O sage?

Viśvāmitra said:

77. I spoke without any fear as you are (our) mother. O mother, this sage Śoṇa will (now) request you.

Śoṇa said:

78. I love that wife (i.e. Kalā) only, (since) the chaste one gave (me) more than said (i.e. asked for by me). Give me that wife only. Otherwise death would come (to me).

Pārvatī said:

79-80a. The wife and husband (should be) equal to (i.e. fit for) each other. Those that are not equal (i.e. fit) are condemned. This one is not proper for you. I shall give you a suitable one. I shall not desert her who came to my abode without a body.

Śoṇa said:

80b-83a. If you do not give (back) this wife, then give me another dear to me; and give me, as an excellent boon, kingdom, and devotion to Śiva.

"It will be just like this." Speaking thus, she said to the sages: "Here, in my (house), you will enjoy for three days. To please god Śiva, eight brāhmaṇas are always to be fed on every Monday, O best sages".

83b-87a. As one desires, one should commence this vow anywhere. When a year is over, one should get fashioned (the image of) the lord with gold weighing four niṣkas or half of it. One should assign all these (articles)—a pair of fine white garments, two chowries, also a couple of fans, wooden sandals, shoes, an umbrella—to a brāhmaṇa. Having given gifts to brāhmaṇas, one should dismiss the brāhmaṇas. A wise man should do so at the time of the conclusion, the beginning and in the middle (of the vow).

87b-93. Every day he (should offer) worship to Śiva, the highest soul. The hymn to be recited at the time of the worship is: 'We know (the lustre) of the Puruṣa. We reflect upon that (lustre) of Mahādeva. May Rudra, therefore, urge us on'. He should worship the god on an altar or in an image. He himself endowed with (i.e. observing) celibacy, should eat once (a day). This is said to be the auspicious vow of (i.e. in honour of) Śiva. It gives pleasure to Śiva. One, a man or a woman, who devoutly practises this (vow), always follows Śaṅkara like his shadow. Today Monday has come (i.e. it is Monday). So meal (will be taken) after mid-day. O you best sages, all of you, after having performed the forenoon rites, please eat food (here)." Hearing the words of the mother (i.e. Pārvatī), and saying "All right", they went to river Gaṅgā for the performance of religious rites.

94-100. Performing their mid-day rites in the confluence and having worshipped the lord of the universe with the sixteen articles of worship, they went to Pārvatī's house and saluted her. By the order of the mother of the worlds, Śālaṅkāyana's son arranged for the formalities like washing the feet. He took the pañcagandhaka (i.e. five fragrant substances) and applied them to (the bodies of) the sages. He who would give pañcagandhaka,

would obtain a great kingdom; and being like Cupid, he would be dear to women. He too, who would offer (presents) to Viṣṇu, would become like Cupid. He who would long for Śiva (and observe a vow) for five years on Kailāsa, would be born as a king having all fragrances, would enjoy pleasures, whould move (as he likes), would behave according to his desire. Musk, sandal, camphor with double agaru are (together) called pañcagandhaka. It is auspicious in all rites.

101-107. When the illustrious brāhmaṇas, to whose bodies pañcagandha was applied, were seated, there came an old, weak, brāhmaṇa dressed like a mad man. He was stark naked, was disabled due to old age and was hurrying. He was bald-headed; he suffered from asthma; he very much hiccoughed; he was oppressed with hunger. He was oozing saliva, had bent with a brush-like moustache and phlegm and his steps were faltering. (He was accompanied by) a girl sixteen years old; she was decorated with all ornaments. She was endowed with form and beauty. She was excellently beautiful in the world. She was looking at men here and there; she was singing; she was dancing, looking at her husband; she was laughing at him. She troubled her old husband (saying): "O weak, mean man, come quickly. O old man, by supporting your hand constantly, I am afflicted. Ornaments, garments, fragrances, garlands, unguents, laughter, singing, also drinking, decoration, a good house, affluence in all seasons are for the augmentation of sex only.

108-112a. Sex alone is the purpose of all desires. If all the pleasures are placed together (on one side) and pleasure of sex remains (i.e. is placed on the other side), and if they are weighed with a balance (then) sexual pleasure is a hundred times more (weighty). Then having obtained (a husband like) you what will a woman like me do?" She, holding him by his hand, spoke these and other words. He gave this reply to her: "What shall we do? Our destiny is like this, knowing me to be like this, do not strike me with bad words." Such a brāhmaṇa went to Pārvatī's house at that time. Not recognising Pārvatī at all he spoke these words:

The brāhmaṇa said:

112b-114a. O sage, know me to be a brāhmaṇa who has

come here for food at the time of (serving the) meals. Do not feed the brāhmaṇas.

His wife said (these) words: "Where is the sage? This is just a woman. The words of a blind man are always certainly like this."

Pārvatī said:

114b-119. Having washed his feet, make him sit on a seat.

She has not satisfied the brāhmaṇa having a vessel (decked) with good jewels by the food cooked in a golden vessel. Then Ambikā (i.e. Pārvatī) called Arundhatī who expounded the Vedas and made her dress the food. Kalā, Arundhatī and the chaste Anasūyā, who were decorated with garlands, sandal, and sacred rice-grains, dressed separately the articles of food of six flavours. When the brāhmaṇas were eating, that naked, brāhmaṇa (-like) figure in a moment ate everything. The ladies could not give (i.e. serve food) to others. Then that goddess Girijā herself started giving (i.e. serving) food, as the brāhmaṇa in a moment ate up whatever was served.

120-124. He desired to eat, along with his beloved, everything that had remained in the vessels. Then Ambikā took it and gave it saying, "Let this be inexhaustible." Then he desired to eat with the lelf hand. Then also saying, "Let this food be inexhaustible for you", gave it to him. Then the best brāhmaṇa produced a thousand hands like this, and desired to eat. The goddess gave him again and again, but did not get angry. Then the brāhmaṇa, realising that he could not divert her mind, washed his hands and feet, and with a fragrant substance applied to his hands, said these words to Pārvatī: "I am pleased. Ask for a boon."

Pārvatī said:

125-127. O best brāhmaṇa, even if you are capable of granting me a boon, what is the use of the boon to me, since Śaṅkara is my husband.

Then the brāhmaṇa said to the goddess: "Of what kind is

Śaṅkara? Is he suitable or not for you? He would be suitable for you, and not otherwise. Handsomeness and cleverness are liked by women. How otherwise such an auspicious woman would have come under my influence?"

Pārvatī said:

128. O brāhmaṇa, having heard your wife's words, and also your words, this is untrue. O brāhmaṇa, is it untruth or venom?

Brāhmaṇa said:

129. I shall tie your braid; sit upon my lap. If your mind will be diverted, wherefrom would be your chastity (i.e. how can you be called chaste).

Pārvatī said:

130-136. O best brāhmaṇa, my vow is to sit on the lap of Śaṅkara only.

Then the highest god, knowing the mind of Pārvatī, became a youth of sixteen years. His tied hair was very glossy. His charming eyes were very affectionate. His body was (fair) like cow's milk. His handsomeness was like that of a crore of Cupids. He was adorned with all ornaments. He had spread both his hands on the shoulder of the woman seated by his side. He sang gently as (Śiva) with Umā. Then Śambhu dragged Pārvatī with his hand, and smiled. Putting both his hands on the two shoulders of the lady (i.e. Pārvatī), he, with all ornaments (on his body), and with pleasing eyes, with his body full of joy and sung (i.e. praised) by sages, sang and danced at that time. By meditating upon Śiva like this, he (i.e. a man) has no grief for hundreds of crores of existences. Joy always comes to him. Thus praised by the best sages, he changed the girl into Viṣṇu. Then that Pārvatī who was pleased, said to the trident-holder:

Pārvati said:

137-141a. Why is it that taking recourse to this condition and turning Viṣṇu into a young girl. Why did you not come in your natural (i.e. original) forms (as Śiva and Viṣṇu)?

Śiva said: "In this vow the food (taken as) a guest is auspicious. I know that those who do not have dejection obtain perfection. It is definite that when there is dejection, the vow is improper. He would, O respectable lady, (stay) in my city, will be endowed with all enjoyments, and living along with his wife, sons and relatives, his (full) life as told in the Vedas, will later go to Vārāṇasī, and having died (there) will obtain salvation."

Śambhu said:

141b-145. When the god remained there, the sages went round him, keeping him to the right, thrice, then saluting five times, again having gone round him, again being (i.e. prostrating themselves) like a staff, and being dismissed by him, went out from that place. Then Śoṇa obtained his wife whose body was auspicious and who was not censured (i.e. was praised). The brāhmaṇa religiously ruled in the country called Bhārata. The devotee of Śiva enjoyed all human pleasures. He was always engaged in charity. He always performed sacrifices and always listened to (the recital of) the Purāṇas. When he died, he went to the auspicious heaven of lord Śaṅkara.

Śambhu said:

146-147. As the occasion had come, I told (you) the importance of the utterance of his names. It destroys all the sins of the listeners—the devotees. It gives all auspicious things. It always gives a good wife and a (good) kingdom. It is auspicious. It gives (i.e. creates in one) devotion to Śiva. It is to be observed. A man should not tell it to any one.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN

The Requirements for Narrating a Purāṇa

Śrī Rāma said:

1-6. In the sky are seen seated in aeroplanes auspicious ones having many forms, good wives, and hundreds of women.

At every step they are honoured by thousands of men and women. Twenty damsels, delicate with (good) figures and beauty, are singing. One is carrying a small box; some have their arms attached with (i.e. are carrying) chowries. (Some) have taken a pair of tāla fans and are fanning. Another (man) has made the pillow of her lap. He has given his hand in the hands of one. He is surrounded by many flatterers. His lotus-like face is blooming due to jests of many kinds done (i.e. indulged in). In one aeroplane, he, having the moon's brightness is seen. In the aeroplanes having hundreds of women, the auspicious lord is seen. Have these done (acts of) religious merit? Or is it (simply) Viṣṇu's illusion, O sage?

Śambhu said:

7-11. These are meritorious brāhmaṇas, leading a householder's life. Your (father) Daśaratha had given that food to them. Once a thought arose in (the minds of) them who are my hearts, as, 'we who depend upon others are happy here. Here hundreds of men depend on us. Due to that religious merit all of us enjoy as we desire. We are waited upon by good women, and are endowed with the pleasure of kingdoms. We are free from old age and death, and we are always young.' Having thought like this, all the brāhmaṇas went to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage. Having honoured them who had come (to him), Vasiṣṭha said (these) words: "O best brāhmaṇas, speak quickly why you have come (to me)."

The brāhmaṇas said:

12-17a. All of us desire to get into an aeroplane which is endowed with all riches and which goes according to the desire (of the occupant). O preceptor, procure it for us.

Hearing this thought (i.e. desire) of them, Vasiṣṭha spoke (these) words: "O brāhmaṇas, Purāṇa which destroys sins, should always be listened to. In it only are seen righteousness (dharma), material welfare (artha) and sensual enjoyments (kāma)." Saying, 'All right', the sages went to sage Aṅgiras who was proficient in Purāṇas, was the greatest (sage), knew all sacred texts, all the scriptures and Purāṇas, and always did good

deeds. Having saluted him, they spoke these words to him: "O brāhmaṇa, our life is fruitful, we are contented, since, O sage, we have seen you."

Aṅgiras said:

17b-22a. I shall do the work for which you have come (to me). With a desire to listen to Purāṇas you have come here. I shall narrate to you the sacred precept which destroys all sins, gives all (kinds of) knowledge, is divine, has sprung up from the knowledge of truth, gives (i.e. creates in one) devotion to Śiva, is charming, gives (i.e. creates in one) devotion to Viṣṇu, is auspicious, which would give (one) a beautiful woman, which (contains) auspicious knowledge of various kinds, discloses the science of sexual love, has enjoyment and salvation as the chief (aim), which illuminates various systems of philosophy, tells about various (kinds of) devotion, which narrates daring courage in devotion, gives the rules about a vow, a site etc. and about (applying) the sacred ash and about worship.

22b-25. The Padma Purāṇa is said to have been accomplished from the lotus of Brahmā. It is narrated by Śiva, and (contains) the description of Pramatha's (an attendant of Śiva) form. This is told elsewhere in the Padma Purāṇa itself. Formerly, Vasiṣṭha, when asked by Dilīpa, narrated it. O best sages, listen to it, (thereby) you will have all knowledge.

Then, by his words the brāhmaṇas got interested in listening to the Purāṇa. They said to the sage (Aṅgiras): "Now doing what, and how should we listen to it?" He too told everything.

26-33. "Listen to the ancient practices. A man (who wants to listen to a Purāṇa) should salute him who knows the Purāṇa and then should offer him a respectful seat. Then saying, '(Please) be seated', he should worship him with sandal and flowers; or he should also offer him wealth and tāmbūla. He should say to him: 'O brāhmaṇa, tell (us) the auspicious story from the Purāṇa.' For the accomplishment of religious merit, material welfare and sensual enjoyments, he should listen to it not by sitting upon a cot or (any other high seat) but (should listen to it) by sitting upon a low seat. The knower of the Purāṇa, having said to the listener, 'Listen', should recite this

hymn: A man deserves to (i.e. should) explain the Purāṇa (after saying) 'Salutation to Viṣṇu, Śiva, Gaṇeśa and Sarasvatī' and having saluted the desired deity. Every day he should listen (to the Purāṇa) or as he would desire. In the same way he should listen to the narration up to the end, (and then) should do his duty. The listener should silently reflect on it; he should silently listen to it. Otherwise Sarasvatī would be angry, and due to her anger dumbness would come. Therefore, the listener should offer tāmbūla etc. (to the narrator); and according to his capacity, he should also undertake the subsistence of the speaker (i.e. the narrator).

34-38. At the commencement (of the narration) of the Purāṇa he should give (the narrator) a pair of washed garments, or should give him a subtle garment or a pair of garments, and (should give him) a great, lovely, beautiful, strong and soft seat. Similarly he should give (him) gold, and cows, a residence etc. O best of all brāhmaṇas, formerly Daksiṇāmūrti Śiva narrated this to sages residing in heaven." Then all the sages, having saluted him seated on the seat, and having separately given him a tāmbūla, remained there with a desire to listen (to the Purāṇa). He too, narrated the whole Purāṇa, which gives everything. The best sages listened to it till the last chapter.

Dilīpa said:

39. A holy place was reached by the aeroplane which moved according to the desire (of the occupant), was equipped with all luxuries, and was fully provided with all facilities.

Vasiṣṭha said:

40-46a. O king, you have not asked enough. That is said to be holy which enables one to be more sportive, O king. He should make Śiva's temple white with whitewash on all sides. He should have women who are endowed with beauty and graceful movements, adorned with all ornaments, skilled in (singing) many good songs, and proficient in various kinds of dancing. There should be four, eight, or six women sounding a drum. Two should be powerful, two should be professionals having the bow of a lute and drum-stick. Four should be dancers, and one should be a contented singer. One or two are

said to be knowing singing well and not garrulous. Two should be kept for (playing upon) the lute, and six or eight are silent. All should be beautiful and should have graceful movements. All should be of firm breasts. They should be skilled in the ways of sexual love and should be trustworthy. Their dresses should be of very fine garments, and their eyes unsteady like (flashes of) lightning.

46b-52. O king, he who has caused women like this to dance (even) on one day, gets into a (divine) aeroplane in a year. His face is looked at by hundreds of women. He is honoured by many young (women). He is complete with his joy being nourished. He is without anger and jealousy. His body is smeared with pañcagandha. His face is like a piece of (i.e. small) cloud with the moon. He is like the sun. All the ten women are having brilliance like that. They have garlands of the pārijāta-flowers which have blossomed the same day and which are fragrant. All have garlands of blossomed flowers of rohi and saffron joined together. They carry the braid on their breasts. Their lips have a good (i.e. sweet) smile on them. He moves being delighted by women like these with dancing and singing. Thus he gets into a (divine) aeroplane and having lived (in heaven) for an inexhaustible (i.e. very long) period, he then would be born as a king. Having ruled over the kingdom like this (i.e. as a king) and having enjoyed the fruit (of the stay in) heaven, he will become a devotee of Śiva.

Śambhu said:

53-56. Aṅgiras told the sages what Vasiṣṭha had told Dilīpa. They executed, like that, the union of song and dance of (i.e. in honour of) the lord of Umā; and having listened to the entire Padma Purāṇa, they became happy. O Rāma, these are those brāhmaṇas who are seated in the excellent aeroplane, in the sky, and appear to be happy and of delighted minds. I have told you all this as ascertained in (i.e. by) the Purāṇas. O Rāma, what other (i.e. more) than this do you wish to hear ?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOURTEEN

Dialogue between Śiva and Rāma

Rāma said:

1-5. Who is this seen in the sky, who is adorned with all ornaments, seated in an aeroplane, who is, as it were, another sun very brightly shining at mid-day and difficult to be looked at by all mortals? On his lap is a sweet-smiling lady like another Lakṣmī. So also there are five good (i.e. beautiful) women. They are singing a sweet song, accompanied by their glances with knitted eye-brows, gentle smiles and sounds made by clappings. At times they are singing songs in their throats (i.e. singing in subdued tones), by striking on one another's hands, and by looking at one another's faces with cupidity preceded by songs. Tell me, due to what religious merit the great meditating sage resembling filaments of lotuses, is sporting like this.

Śambhu said:

6-16. O Rāma, this brāhmaṇa was formerly endowed with all (kinds of) riches. He had many pleasures. He was engaged in maintaining his wife. He was sonless. He was without (i.e. he did not give in) charity. He was without the worship of (i.e. did not worship) deities. He was bereft of the five (great) sacrifices and without self-study. He was bent upon eating (only) in the morning, mid-day and evening. He was impure. Once he went to the house of noble Gautama on the holy mountain of Tryambaka resorted to by many hosts of sages. There also was a beautiful house fashioned with pillars of crystal. Its walls were smeared with liquid agaru (sandal), musk and camphor. Its ground was beautiful with the fragrance of the santāna-flowers and was sprinkled with musk and juice of flowers. It was beautified with many fine, white canopies. The courtyard was adorned with large plantain and nut trees. In the lake nearby there was the sweet humming of the bees. The quarters were filled with the fragrance produced by the sandal-trees. The quarters were filled with instruction in songs and joyful songs. It was fashioned with a machine removing the heat produced in summer. In it a cover is made with the citraka tree

covering the shoots of the plantain trees. The very glossy and thick panels of the doors are made of the pāṭīra tree. The inner walls are fashioned in such a way as to be fragrant and giving great joy. As a portion of the lord a beautiful, pleasant raised seat is prepared. The seat is fashioned with gold and is having a beautiful altar. It has very pleasing and thick shade.

17-20. It is fashioned at the root of a bunyan tree. It is decorated at its skirts with lakes having flowers and groups of plantain trees. It has the clouds showing sprays as they are touching the great bunyan tree. It is decorated with beautiful groves having breezes from heavenly gardens. It is decorated with wells, lakes etc. and with many groves. In that abode wind giving comfort, blew very gently. Excellent women beautiful in all limbs and the wealth of Cupid, played on different musical instruments such as a lute, a flute and a pipe.

21-25a. Women had triple symphony (of song, dance, instrumental music) in (all) the four directions and above also. In golden vessels etc. were put auspicious tablets of sacred ash. They were made fragrant with all fragrant substances and were fumigated with good incenses. Heaps of kuśa were arranged; there were crores of rosaries. In the outskirts there were hundreds of deer-hides. In such a house the best sage, fit to be saluted by gods, put camphor etc. in the four directions, and arranged a throne of camphor on the seat of sandal, which was fine, white, very glossy and was covered with camphor.

25b-32a. He bathed (the Phallus of) Saṅkara with water made fragrant and with milk. Having got Sadāśiva bathed with the accompaniment of other Vedic hymns, he put a piece of cloth as a seat on the wooden seat with camphor. He put a vessel with parts in front of it. He put these (articles) in the (various) parts (of the vessel). In one pot he put the sacred rice grains. In another he put sacred rice grains with sesamum. In one he put pañcagandha; in another he put aṣṭagandhaka. He also (put) the musk from Kāsmīra, camphor and sandal in other pots and arranged them at the place of worship. Then the worship was done in the way selected. God Sadāśiva with five faces remains in the Phallus. The Phallus is his cover. Śakti (power, his counterpart) is placed there. Viṣṇu is the cover of Śakti, and Brahmā is the cover of Viṣṇu. The Moon is the cover

of Brahmā; the Sun is the cover of the Moon. The sacred texts are his (i.e. the Sun's) cover. They are protected among the goddesses of the quarters; and they are covered by the quarters. Śambhu is the cover of the quarters, and the qualities are his cover.

32b-42a. The worship of the Phallus of Śiva with ten covers is auspicious. This would be (i.e. is) the opinion of some. The cover of knowledge is said (to come) after (these) covers. It is said to have the cover of Umā. Viṣṇu is its cover. Brahmā is Viṣṇu's cover. The Moon is the cover of Brahmā. The Sun is the cover of the Moon. The lord is the cover of the Sun. Thus the cover is said to be of sixteen kinds. The fivefold cover without Brahmā is said to be the best. These three are the covers of the Moon, Viṣṇu and Śakti. The unique cover—the cover of Ambikā—is said to be the best. Or in the worship of Śiva, the guardians of the quarters would be (i.e. are) the cover. In case of Śiva uncovering or worship is recommended. One should worship Śiva with the articles placed in the eight parts of the vessel. I shall describe the characteristics of the vessel useful for all rites. It shines with gold or is made of copper. A man should fashion the eight auspicious parts of the vessel resembling pearl-oysters. He should fashion it with eight angles resembling the petals of a lotus. It is recommended to have the parts of the measure of a pala. It should be uncovered and of large parts. In the centre it should not be large. At the top it should have eight parts of the size of a lotus. Or through the Śakti he should have it with five parts. Or should make it with three in the Śakti, and as he thinks.

42b-47. The wise one should keep the vessel in such a way as it looks beautiful. The rosary fashioned with eight hundred rudrākṣas hidden in the Śakti is auspicious. He should have the sacred thread with thirty or eight. One should be put on each of the cheeks and two should be tied on the forearms. He held one on the head and the great sage had one around his neck. The rosary was made with rudrākṣas and crystals and gems. The sage has fashioned a seat of tiger-skin and was seated in the Padmāsana posture.[1] Having finished invoking (the deity), having

1. Padmāsana—A posture in which the left foot is put at the root of the right thigh and the right foot is put on the left thigh.

offered him a seat, materials of worship, water for washing the feet and rinsing the mouth, he bathed Śaṅkara with the water of Gaṅgā and with flowers of bakula and pāṭala along with aṣṭagandha kept in golden vessels, and (wiped the Phallus) well with a washed piece of cloth.

48-53. At the door was kept a copper pan. It was auspicious with an oval wooden vessel; so also with a cow-horn and the horn of a gavaya, or with a conch curved to the right or with pots decked with jewels, or with golden or silver or copper or bell-metal pots; he bathed (the Phallus) according to his desire with (water from) the fine golden pitchers. A man may even bathe (the Phallus) with water from earthen vessels or with lotus petals, or with (water from) vessels made of (the leaves of) palāśa, mango, jambu and other trees. He should bathe the lord. He should, after having solicited the lord with the hymn 'salutation to you' etc. called *Śatarudriya* or with the repetition of *Śaṁ ca*, of the nature of tranquillity, then apply sandal etc. according to his capacity. Then he should worship him with nice flowers and bilva-leaves.

54-70. That Gautama worshipped the lord with (the leaves of) tulasī and maruvā, white and big blue lotuses, so also with blue lotus and water-lilies, so also with karavīra-flowers, with karṇikāra-flowers, white lotuses, (the leaves of) the aparājitā (creeper), with sesamum and sacred rice grains, with sarala-leaves mixed with sesamum. Thus (he worshipped) the great lord. He fumigated him with camphor, agaru (sandal), musk, sarja, and agaruka-sandal and with other (incenses). He lighted sixteen lamps having camphor-wicks and put on props. He made an excellent offering of eatables to Maheśa. It contained food of well-cooked rice and flour; (it contained varieties of food) like those that could be eaten, that could be licked, that could be sucked; it was accompanied with sweet articles, and with food of five types; it was rich with many cooked vegetables, and mixed with many cooked articles. The drink was accompanied by twenty (ingredients), and with grapes and plantains; it was accompanied by eight kinds of soup, and with roots and fruits. It was also arranged with other articles as were available. The sage offered the food with excellent flowers. Having offered a thousand lights (to be waved in front of the deity) kept in golden

vessels to the deity and having saluted him, he (offered) crushed pieces of nut, washed leaves, with the tops of their backside (not visible), and covered with a very white cover. He also offered auspicious camphor-powder put on three leaves. He also offered the tāmbūla kept in a golden vessel to the lord. Then after he had gone round the deity by keeping him to the right, and saluted him, eight women who had held lutes and flutes and who were playing on beautiful musical instruments reached the vicinity of the sage. He himself, taking a small instrument of bell-metal, started singing. When Gautama started singing, the women protracted the tone. Others gently played upon the musical instruments. When the sage was singing sweetly, those having the manifestation of notes, danced in front of Maheśa. It was (a) wonderful (sight). In the meanwhile the revered sage Nārada arrived (there). Gautama also honoured and saluted him who had come (there), and said to him: "I am fortunate. None else is like me. What is the object of your arrival and wherefrom have you come?"

Śrī Nārada said:

71-74a. Having eaten in Bāṇa's abode, I have come (here) from the nether world. The noble ones, Bāṇa, Śukra and others will come to (your) house.

Then in a moment the demon Bāṇa, conqueror of the enemies' cities, mounted upon an elephant and accompanied by (an army of) twenty akṣauhiṇīs[1], came there. Śukra (had mounted) upon another elephant. Prahlāda (was seated) in an excellent chariot. Vṛṣaparvan (was seated) in an excellent chariot, and Bali on an excellent horse.

74b-83. Knowing them all to have arrived, Gautama along with his disciples went out and hurriedly offered them a respectful offering. They also, seeing Gautama, got down from the elephant etc. The demons also saluted him. The best sage saluted Bhārgava (i.e. Śukra), embraced all the demons, duly honoured them and made arrangements for the camping of the army. The sage washed

1. Akṣauhiṇī—A large army consisting of 21870 chariots, as many elephants, 65610 horses and 109350 foot soldiers.

the feet of Śukra and put (i.e. sprinkled) water on his head, and offered him a worship with beautiful fruits. All the demons, along with their priests having offered the rites, after bathing in the wells, lakes and ponds, entered that auspicious abode—the hermitage of Gautama, situated on the confluence, and worshipped the deities in the brāhmaṇa's house. Śukra worshipped Śiva on the altar which was immediately fashioned. On his left side only, Prahlāda worshipped Viṣṇu; and Bali worshipped Śiva. So also other excellent demons (worshipped other deities). Bāṇa worshipped god Śiva alone. Śukra too worshipped the revered lord of Umā. In the mid-day Gautama also worshipped Śaṁkara. All had put on white garments; the bodies of all were dusted with sacred ash. All had made marks of three lines on the proper places (of their bodies) with white sacred ash.

84-88. Having saluted Śukra, all of them commenced purification of the elements. In the lotus of the heart there is a cavity. In it are the five elements. Among them is ether; in ether there is pure air. In it is the great lord. A man should meditate upon him, the bright and auspicious one. The element is united with ignorance, is impure, and connected with everything. He should burn that body in the lamp of ether with the fire of knowledge. Having burnt egotism covering ether, he should then burn ether. Having burnt the ether, he should burn air and then the element of fire. Then having burnt the element of water and the element of earth, he should burn the qualities resorting to them and then should get burnt his body.

89-92. The man, having thus burnt the elements with the fire of knowledge, (should worship) Viṣṇu who remains in the lock of hair on the crown of the head, who is full of the flavour of joy, who is having rays like those coming from the moon, and who is auspicious, with the rays produced from Śiva's body and united with the nectar-liquid. Then the flame (becomes) very cold like the rays of the moon. The inundation has also become dense due to the spreading lustres of the nectar. Gradually the group of elements is inundated.

93-97a. Having thus purified the elements, the pure mortal, fit to perform the rites becomes pure only for offering the worship and doing the muttering (of hymns). Then on meditation upon the god, the destruction of the sin due to the murder of a brāh-

maṇa follows. Having in this way meditated upon him, lustrous like the moon's light, and quickly placed (the deity) in the Phallus of Śiva, having thought on Sadāśiva in the lamp, he should worship the immutable with (the hymn of) five letters. He should also go through the formalities like invocation, should bathe (the Phallus of) Śaṅkara as before. The seat should be made of udumbara, silver, gold, and should be covered with cloth etc. In the end he should shower bubbles on the seat. He should fashion one (representation of) snake in the seat above, a pair of them near the deity, on the right side and the left. In between the serpents he should put a japā-flower and a piece of cloth of (the measure of) twelve prātis[1].

97b-99. He should put the lord of the form of the Phallus and fit to be worshipped with very white (materials) and along with the seat on the piece of cloth. The demons led by Bāṇa and others, having done this, and having repeatedly offered pañcagandha and aṣṭagandha, having worshipped (the deity) with flowers, leaves, sesamum-seeds, sacred rice grains mixed with sesamum-seeds or with only sacred grains, having duly offered incense, having presented a lamp, and an offering as told (before), having finished the remaining (part of the) worship, all of them sang and also danced there.

100-113a. In the meanwhile there came Gautama's disciple named Śaṅkarātman. His dress was like that of a mad person—he was naked, and had many coverings. At times he appeared like an excellent brāhmaṇa, at times like a cāṇḍāla. At times (he looked) like a śūdra. At times (he looked) like a meditating saint or an ascetic. He roared, jumped and danced, praised and sang. He wept, heard clearly; at times, he fell (and again) rose. He was endowed with Śiva's knowledge only; he was full of great joy. He arrived at the time of the meals, and went near Gautama. He ate with his preceptor eating at times what was left over by the preceptor. At times he licked up the plate of the preceptor; at times he went (away) silently. Holding the preceptor's hand, he, at times, himself ate (food). At times he urinated in the house (itself); at times he applied mud (to his body). He always held his preceptor with his hand and taking

1. Prāti—The span of the thumb and the forefinger.

him into his abode seated him on his own seat and fed him. The sage Gautama himself ate from his plate. To know his mind, a beautiful, auspicious lady Ahalyā called the disciple and said to him, "Eat". She put foodin a golden pot and a drink (like water) etc. in a goblet. She put fire in a plate, and a heap of charcoals and of thorns in another, and (said to him), "Eat, eat (these)". The sage also ate (them). The brāhmaṇa ate up the fire, as (easily as) he would drink water. He also ate the thorns and remained as before. Formerly he was invited for food by the daughters of the sages. Every day they gave him clods, water and cowdung. Eating mud, wooden staff, he was pleased and delighted.

113b-120. Such was the sage having the figure like that of a cāṇḍāla. Taking his old shoes in his hands (one in the right and one in the left), and (using) words fit for a śūdra he came to Vṛṣaparvan. The naked (disciple) stood between Vṛṣaparvan and the lord. Vṛṣaparvan, not knowing him, harassed him and cut off his head. When the best brāhmaṇa was killed, this mobile and immobile world became extremely excited; so also the sages in it. The very noble Gautama was very much afflicted. Tears, indicating his grief, went (i.e. flowed) out of his eyes. In presence of all the demons, Gautama uttered (these) words: "What (great) sin he has committed since he has cut off this head of this constant devotee of Śiva and greater (i.e. dearer) than my life (to me). It is virtually my death as the preceptor is of the form of his disciple. Certainly we must die where (i.e. when) the death of Śiva's devotees, full of piety and always living in Śiva, is seen".

Śukra said:

121-125. I shall bring him back to life. Śiva is dear to my family. How can this brāhmaṇa die? See the power of my penance.

When the best brāhmaṇa was speaking like this, Gautama also died. When he died, Śukra also cast his life through deep meditation. Learning from Prahlāda that he was dead, all the lordly demons died just in a moment. That was a wonder. The

army of that intelligent Bāṇa also died. Ahalyā tormented with grief, repeatedly and loudly wept. The lord was worshipped with (the materials of) worship of Śiva by Gautama. The great meditating sage Vīrabhadra on seeing all (that) got angry.

126-135. He said: "Oh how painful! Many lords are dead. I shall inform Śiva of this; I shall do as he tells." Having determined like this he went to the immutable one to the Mandara mountain. Having saluted Śiva, he told him all this. Seeing Brahmā and Viṣṇu standing there, Śiva spoke (these) words: "O Viṣṇu, seeing the daring act done by my devotees, I the granter of boons, will go (there). You two also will come (with me)." Then the lord mounted upon the bull (i.e. Nandin). Chowries were moved by Vāyu. Extremely lovely umbrellas were held (over the lord's head) by Nandika who was very well dressed. The very white, golden staff of the lord was held by some ascetic. Obtaining the consent of the lord, Viṣṇu got on the enemy of the serpents (i.e. Garuḍa). He whose Kaustubha (gem) was noticeable, shone with two reddish and dark blue umbrellas. With Śiva's consent Brahmā also mounted upon his swan. Brahmā shone with two umbrellas having the brilliance and form of the indragopa insect. All gods led by Indra got into their own vehicles. Gladdened by (the sound of) various musical instruments all of them set out. Crowded with crores of (Śiva's) attendants, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva went to Gautama's hermitage. Seeing that great wonder (Śiva) brought his devotee back to life by looking at him from the corner of his left (eye). Śaṁkara said to Gautama: "I am pleased with you. Ask for a boon."

Gautama said:

136-140. If, O lord of gods, you are pleased with me, and if a boon is to be granted to me, then let me always have the power of worshipping your Phallus, O great lord. This is what I have chosen. O you three-eyed (god), listen to this: My noble disciple is without (i.e. does not care for) what should and what should not be given up. With his eyes he does not see what should be seen with a feeling of mineness. With his nose he does not smell what is fit for being smelt; nor (does

he give) what is fit to be given, or (does not do) any other similar act. Knowing this he did like that. The very illustrious meditating saint, of a figure resembling that of a mad man, and known as Śaṅkarātman did like that. Nobody would prohibit him; nobody would harm him. O god, grant me this, and also the deathlessness of these.

The lord said:

141-142a. May they live till the end of the kalpa; then let them enjoy salvation. For a moment we shall stay in this extensive, specially made and auspicious abode of you. Then we shall go home.

Gautama said:

142b-147a. O lord, I am asking for an improper thing. A suppliant does not notice a blemish. O lord of gods, if you like, give me what cannot be obtained by Brahmā and others.

Then the lord looked at Viṣṇu and seized Viṣṇu's hand. Sadāśiva, having laughed, said to him whose eyes were like lotuses: "O Govinda, you are thin-bellied. What food should be offered to you? Or get in and as in your own house eat (whatever food you choose). Or go to the house of Pārvatī who will fill your belly." Speaking thus, the lord held his hand and went to a secluded corner. And as told before, he said to Nandin, the door-keeper. He told Gautama the subsequent words of Viṣṇu.

Sadāśiva said:

147b-161. O sage, procure food for all of us. We desire to eat (food).

Saying so Śaṅkara went to a secluded place with Viṣṇu. Having got on a soft bed, the excellent deities lay there. Having talked to each other, both of them got up. The two excellent gods went to the bank of Gaṅgā, and bathed (in) deep (water). They drank water from each other's hands. Then Viṣṇu and Śiva quickly splashed water (on each other). Then Śaṁkara, scattered lotus-filaments held in the hollow of his hands over

Viṣṇu's face having eyes like fully blown lotuses. Keśava closed his eyes when the filaments fell (on his face). In the meanwhile, Śiva mounted upon the shoulder of Viṣṇu and holding with his hands Viṣṇu's hand, plunged him (into water). Viṣṇu who was (thus) repeatedly troubled by being plunged, delicately put down Śiva. He dragged him by seizing his feet and whirled him round. (Śiva) struck on the chest of Viṣṇu and dropped him down. Then Viṣṇu who had got up, took water in the hollow of his hands, and scattered it over Śambhu. Then Hara (i.e. Śiva) scattered it over Viṣṇu. Thus they sported in water. The group of sages also had their matted hair dishevelled in the flurry of water-sport. Then due to the confusion, they tied the matted hair with others' matted hair; and the excellent sages, strong or weak, drew (the matted hair). They caused others to fall, and cried and wept also. When such confusion started and took place in the water, Nārada danced and cried in the sky. Playing upon the musical instrument—his charming lute—he loudly sang a song. With a charming song, he sang in ten modes.

162-171a. Śaṁkara, Lokabhāvana (literally, the creator of the world), heard that sweet song; and he himself gradually began to sing sweetly. When the lord of gods himself sang the mingled auspicious Kaiśikī (veriety of the dramatic style), Nārada danced and sang indistinctly. Taking up a firm note having all (good) characteristics and endowed with the nectar of the flow of the excellence (of his voice) he connected it with that song; and Viṣṇu beat the drum with his hands. The four-faced (Brahmā) had a depression, and Tumbura became garrulous. Gautama and others quietly sang in protracted tones. When the lord of monkeys—Hanūmat—sang a sweet song, the wearied became glad; the weak became strong. All of them, having just despised their own songs, got confused. All the gods, the hosts of sages and the demons became silent. Only that Hanūmat sang, and all others were listeners. In the mid-day when the time for meal came, Śiva, listening to the song, took a couple of silken garments. Viṣṇu, (took) a couple of yellow garments, and Brahmā a red one. Then performing rites befitting themselves, and (prescribed to be performed at) that time, all the deities, mounting on their own vehicles, went out.

171b-184a. But the great lord (i.e. Śiva) who loved music, said to the lord of monkeys: "O monkey, you are ordered by me. Be fearless and mount upon the bull (i.e. Nandin), and facing me, sing all songs." Then the best of the monkeys said to the revered great god: "The power to mount upon the bull is only yours. None else has it. O lord by mounting upon your vehicle, I shall be a sinner. O lord of gods, just mount upon me. I (shall be) a bird—Śiva's vehicle. I shall sing facing you. See". Then the lord got upon Hanūmat as on his own bull. When the god Śaṁkara got upon the head and neck of Hanūmat, he cut his skin, and having turned his face, sang as before. Śambhu, listening to the nectar-like (sweet) song, went to Gautama's house. All the hosts of gods and sages and the demons came there. At the time of the meal, Gautama honoured them. When Hanūmat sang, everything like the household utensils made from dry wood increased (i.e. put forth shoots). At the time of his singing the eyes of all stood (rivetted) as in a picture. With his two hands (Hanūmat) held the feet of the lord. He (i.e. the lord) was having (on his person) all ornaments. He had a pleased form. He was young. He was praised by the gods with their hands well-folded on the slender waist. Having held Hanūmat's head with his hands, Śiva turned it to the east. He put one of his feet on the hollow of the hands of Hanūmat, seated in the Padmāsana posture, and the other into his mouth, and the lord affectionately and gently seized Hanūmat's nose with two of his toes. Then he put one foot against his belly, then into his circular navel and the other one into the hollow of his hands. Then Śaṁkara, seized his head, bent it, touched his back with his chin, with (i.e. producing) a sound. Śaṁkara put round Hanūmat's neck a necklace made of pearls.

184b-191a. Then Viṣṇu spoke these words to Śiva: "There is none (else) in the entire universe, since your foot inaccessible to scriptures and gods, remained on the monkey's body. Your foot is not made manifest (even) by all Upaniṣads. The monkey is fully united with it. Your foot is (i.e. your feet are) not (reached) through the means like restraints etc. and deep meditation. The power is spotless in Hanūmat, the lotus of the heart of a great meditating sage. (Even) best sages, after having practised difficult penance for thousands of crores of years, do

not know your form, then how (can they reach) your foot (i.e. feet)? Oh! wonderful is the luck (of the monkey), that the unsteady beast, the monkey, holds the couple of your feet not capable (of being conceived) in their hearts by meditating sages. For a thousand years every day, I devoutly worshipped the foot (i.e. the feet) of the lord. But you did not manifest it (i.e. them) to me; (and) there is a talk among people that Viṣṇu is dear to Śambhu. The monkey (alone) is dear to Śambhu like that; I do not have luck like that."

Sadāśiva said:

191b-197a. O revered Viṣṇu, none else is so dear to me as you, or Pārvatī is (dear to me) like you. None else is (dear) to me.

Then saluting the great god, Gautama respectfully said: "O you immeasurable one, O god, O you treasure of pity, come along. The mid-day has passed. It is time for meal for all." Then the mighty great god (i.e. Śiva) sipped water, and along with Viṣṇu, entered Gautama's house, and started eating food. Śiva who was adorned with jewelled rings, anklets, silken garment, a girdle (bright) like lightning, many necklaces, (many) golden ornaments put around the neck, a sacred thread, upper garments, with jewelled rings that were hanging and with excellent, ornamented hair, with the besmearing of pañcāṅga and sandal, with armlets, with bracelets and rings, sat on an excellent seat; and the god seated Viṣṇu, so as to face himself, on an excellent seat.

197b-199. The two excellent gods, Viṣṇu and Śiva were seated facing each other. Gautama too gave them golden vessels. The sage prepared food of thirty varieties, excellent sweetened milk of four kinds, two hundred (varieties of) well cooked food, three hundred (varieties) of the mixture of uncooked and cooked (food); so also the sage prepared food from good bulbs and vegetables. Vegetables etc. were accompanied by ghee. He offered them (food containing) sugar etc. of twenty-five kinds; so also pomegranates etc., plantains, bunches of grapes, dates, oranges, rose-apples, piyāla-fruits, nuts.

200-206a. Having duly offered these and other articles and

having given apośana[1] (i.e. making the seat for the food), the brāhmaṇa said to them: "(Please) eat." When all of them were eating, Gautama himself took a fan made of very fine cloth and fanned Śiva and Viṣṇu. Then the great god desired to indulge into jest. (He said:) "O Viṣṇu, look at Hanūmat. (See) how the monkey is eating (food)." When Viṣṇu was looking at the monkey, the great god (i.e. Śiva), even when the hosts of sages were observing, threw a cake into Viṣṇu's dish. He also gave Hanūmat sweetened milk etc. left over by him. (Hanūmat said to him:) "O lord, what is left over is not to be eaten according to your statement." (Śiva said:) "Offering of cooked food to me is not proper. The cooked food, so also leaves, flowers, fruits offered to me should be thrown into a well only. Due to your words an article is not enjoyed; and an article is eaten only due to your favour."

Sadāśiva said:

206b-208a. When the bāṇa-liṅga, self-born and bright like the moon remains, the eating of the cooked articles of food of (i.e. offered to) Śambhu should be known to be like the Cāndrā-yaṇa (vow). This is now the time for eating. It would be taste-less due to (our resorting to) other tales. I shall tell you after we have eaten. Eat the food without any doubt.

208b-212. Then the sage performed the rite of (sprinkling) water (indicating commencement of the meal). He filled the pitchers reddish, very glossy and fine, with all their parts washed in many ways and dried; with water from lakes, rubbed with seeds and cleaned. He covered the new altar on the sandy bank of the river with spotless, whiter, fine pieces of cloth, and put on them pitchers full of water. In them he should put yellow orpiment, nut-meg, kaṅkola, musk-powder, sandal, and under the layer he should put a garland white like the moon-rays. After having cleaned the pitcher with water and cloth, he should have a knot like a peacock's tail; then should put a garland of bakula and pāṭala flowers.

213-220a. He should keep the pitchers in a place where

1. Apośana—The act of making an upastaraṇa (seat) and apidhāna (covering) for the food eaten.

there is no sun and which has gentle breezes and should be fanned with subtle fans. O king, then he should also sprinkle the goad. Having consecrated well-controlled men or women or their daughters who have bathed and put on washed garments, he should put the sweet, tawny exuberance, thick, profuse sandal. Having applied it to the armpit, neck, he should apply jāpyaka to his head, and apply pañcagandha. Their good hair should have flowers tied to it. Their faces should be good and should be very clean. Such women only whose bodies have saffron applied to them, are proper. So also young women adorned with ornaments. He should offer food through these women or men. They also should, at the time of offering, keep the pitcher covered with fine and small (piece of) cloth in their left hand, and looking into it, unbinding it which is put on a thread, should cause water to be given.

220b-226. Thus the sage Gautama honoured them. When all the noble ones of them like Śiva and others had eaten, had washed their feet and hands, and had rubbed perfumes to their hands, the god of gods, Śiva, was seated on his seat. The gods along with the sages were seated on the lower seats. In the jewelled pots were kept pieces of nuts after covering them after having fumigated them. They were angle-less, round, big, small and even thin. Then Gautama, having cleaned white leaves and put powder of camphor-pieces on them, offered it to Śaṅkara (saying) "O god, accept the tāmbūla." When the sage said these words, (he said to Hanūmat:) "O monkey, take the tāmbūla, give me the pieces." The monkey said: "O great lord, I have no purity. How can purity come to a monkey after his having eaten fruits?"

Sadāśiva said:

227-230. Everything would be purified by my words. Due to my words poison becomes nectar. All Vedas are due to my words. Deities are due to my words. Knowledge of religion is due to my words. Salvation is said to be due to my words. Purāṇas, sacred texts and the codes of law are due to my words. Therefore, take the tāmbūla and give me the good pieces.

The monkey took the tāmbūla with the nut-pieces with his

left hand. (Then) from that he took the leaves and gave the nut-pieces (to Śiva). Śiva ate the camphor after taking it when it was given.

231-235a. When the god had the tāmbūla, Pārvatī holding the hands of Jayā and Vijayā, came to the sage's house from the Mandara mountain. Then, having saluted the feet of the god, she hung down her face in modesty. Lifting her face, the three-eyed god (Śiva) said these (words): "O you most respectable lady among gods, I have offended you. I have eaten without you. So also listen to (other things), O beautiful lady. Having kept you in my abode, without god of gods, and free from all bonds, I have committed a great sin. O you great goddess, (please) forgive (me), and giving up your anger, look (at me)."

235b-237a. She, who was thus addressed, did not speak, and went out with Arundhatī. Coming to know that she was going out, the sage (Gautama) saluted her (prostrating before her) like a staff. Beginning with that a man should salute the great god (prostrating before him) like a staff and praise him. Pārvatī said (to Gautama): "O Gautama, what do you desire?"

Gautama said:

237b-238a. O goddess, I am fortunate. If a boon is to be given to me (by you then), O illustrious one, now take food in my abode.

The goddess said:

238b-243. O sage, I shall eat in your house if I am permitted by Śaṅkara.

The brāhmaṇa Gautama went to the god and securing his permission, again went (to Pārvatī). He fed goddess Pārvatī and Arundhatī also. Then Pārvatī, after having eaten and with all perfumes and ornaments went along with hundreds of maiden-followers to Śiva. Then Śaṁkara said to the goddess: "Go to Gautama's abode. After having offered my sandhyā prayer I shall again come to (Gautama's) abode." When told like this, the goddess went to Gautama's abode. All (gods and sages) desiring to offer their sandhyā prayers went out. All of them, Maheśa and others offered their sandhyā prayers on the

bank (of the river). Then Śiva facing the north and going through the nyāsa muttered the prayers.

244-247a. Then Viṣṇu, of a great lustre, said these (words) to Śiva: "Which (prayer) will you, who are saluted by all, are worshipped by all, invoked in all sacrifices, mutter? All, having folded their palms so as to form a hollow, wait upon you only. To whom have you, O lord of gods, folded your palms (in obeisance)? O great god, you are the giver of the fruit of such religious acts as salutation. Tell (me) who gives you fruit, who is saluted by you, who is superior to you."

Śaṅkara said:

247b-254. O Viṣṇu, I am not meditating upon anyone. I am not saluting anything. O Viṣṇu, I am not waiting upon anyone. I shall not mutter any prayer here; but O Viṣṇu, I have to exhibit (like) this for leading the unbelievers to activity. Otherwise they will be sinners. Therefore, for obliging the world, I have done all this.

Saying. "Yes", Viṣṇu then saluted him and remained (there). Then all the hosts of gods and sages reached Gautama's house and worshipped Pinākin (i.e. the Pināka-holder), the god of gods, O best of the Raghus, the god (i.e. Śiva) remained singing with Hanūmat. At that time they all muttered the five-syllabled great lore. Śiva, seizing the hand of Hanūmat, went near the goddess (Pārvatī). The divine couple sat on the same couch. That Hanūmat remained singing. So also Tumbura and Nārada. The great lord indulged into many kinds of sports. Calling Pārvatī, the lord said these words to her:

Śrī Sadāśiva said:

255-259a. I shall arrange your braid. O auspicious one, come before me.

The goddess said: "It is not proper for the husband to serve his wife. When my hair is dressed by you, another calamity may befall. O god, all the desired facts (may) not accrue on dressing (my) hair(?). When the (hair) is tied, the cleaning of the shoulders will have to be done; so also the cleaning of (i.e. removing of)

the hair, flowers adhering to my back (will have to be done). When this takes place (i.e. when you do this), if the noble ones would come, what reply would you saluted by gods and others, have? O supreme lord, if they do not come, my fear will come to an end."

259b-264. Śaṅkara drew her who was talking like this, (near him) and putting her on his lap, untied her braid of hair, separated the hair with his hands, and spread them with his nails. He put on her hair the garland of pārijāta flowers given by Viṣṇu, tied her braid, and also put on the garland (that he had) in his hand. Taking the garland of jasmine flowers he tied her hair. The great god also put the garland of flowers given by Brahmā. He also made Pārvatī put on a pair of garments having unidentifiable fragrance. Then the great lord cleaned (i.e. removed the hair etc. from) her shoulders and back. The wearing garment of the goddess, with the tie loosened, had gone down. The god, saying, "What is this?" tied the knot of the wearing garment. "I am ardently looking for your nose-ornament."

265-266. Saying so, he took a bright pearl. The pearl was bright due to its contact with turmeric. (He said to her:) "Put on this pearl dear to me and you."

Pārvatī said:

267-270. O Śambhu, your abode is rich with all articles. I have already known all the articles. Oh, due to superior and other ornaments the wealth is known. Your head is decorated with string of the heads of brāhmaṇas; you also have the Naraka-string as the ornament of your chest. The poisonous Śeṣa and Vāsuki are your bracelets. The quarters are your two garments. Your matted hair is your (beautiful) hair. The sacred ash is the unguent to your body. The great bull is your vehicle; and your pedigree and your family are already known! Your parents are not known. Your body has a deformed eye.

271-277a. To Pārvatī who was speaking like this, Viṣṇu who was very angry, said: "O goddess, why are you censuring the god of gods, the lord of the world? O good lady, I shall abandon my dear life. Indeed this is your lack of restraint. Our vow is to die where the censure of the god is (undertaken),

O auspicious lady." Saying so, Viṣṇu proceeded to cut off his head with his nails. Śiva seized his hand, and said: "Do not do this rash act. All the words of (i.e. uttered by) Pārvatī are dear to me, (though) they are not dear to (i.e. liked by) you. O Viṣṇu, what is desired to be done (by you) is not liked by me." Saying 'Yes' the revered Viṣṇu remained silent. Then Hanūmat respectfully said these words to the god: "I desire to carry out my vow of worship without a desire. I would (therefore) go to worship (my desired deity). Please permit me."

Śaṅkara said:

277b-279a. Whose worship (i.e. to worship whom are you going)? Where will the worship (be done)? What flowers (will you use)? What leaves (will you use?) Tell (all that to me). Who is your preceptor? Which is the hymn (you will employ)? How will the worship (be done)?

When the god was speaking like this, Hanūmat trembled very much. With his entire body shaking, he started praising (Śiva):

Hanūmat said:

279b-286a. Salutation to the great god Śiva of an immeasurable form. Salutation to the meditating sage, the prop of abstract meditation and to the preceptor of the meditating sages. Salutation to him who is known (only) by the meditating sages, to the god, and to the lord of the wise. Salutation to you, the lord of the Vedas; salutation to you, the lord of gods. Salutation (to you who are) meditation, who are understood by meditation, to the preceptor of creators. Salutation to the wise, to one who is understood by the wise, to the lord of the earth etc. I am your servant—with these and other words salutation to the treasure of the Vedic words. Salutation to you who is to be thought of with (the utterance of such) words as 'stretch out'. O you eight-formed[1] one, salutation to you. Salutation to the lord of beings.

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1. Aṣṭamūrti—For the eight forms of Śiva, see verse 373 of this chapter.

To Tryambaka (i.e. having three eyes), to Trinetra (i.e. the three-eyed one), salutation to you having the Sun and the Moon as your eyes. Salutation to you, to whom the excellent bhṛṅga-rāja, and dhattūra and flowers of droṇa are dear, to whom big nuts, punnāga, campaka etc. are dear. Salutation to you; my repeated salutations to you.

Then Śiva said to Viśṇu: "Do not be afraid. Tell me the whole (thing)."

Hanūmat said:

286b-294. With one's body dusted with the sacred ash one should worship Śiva's Phallus with flowers procured by day, and even now remaining (fresh) like that. O god, I shall respectfully narrate to you the auspicious rite of Śiva's worship. When evening has come, a man should bathe without (making) his head (wet). Then the most wise man should put on a washed garment and sip water twice. Then having taken sacred ash he should bathe in honour of Agni. Then muttering (a hymn) with Om eight times, or with the five-syllabled hymn or with any other name, he, with darbhas in his hand, should collect the sacred ash consecrated seven times. Saying '*Īśānaḥ sarva-vidyānām*' he should drop the ash on his head. He should sprinkle (i.e. apply) the ash over his face by saying '*Tat puruṣāya vidmahe*'. He should put on (i.e. apply to) his chest the sacred ash (after saying:) '*Aghorebhyaḥ atha ghorebhyaḥ.*' He should apply it to the private parts (of his body) saying '*Vāma-devāya namaḥ.*' He should throw on (i.e. apply to) his feet the sacred ash after saying '*Sadyojātam prapadyāmi.*' The wise one should dust his entire body with the sacred ash, with the utterance of *Om*. The excellent rite of bathing etc. is prescribed for the (first) three castes. I shall tell (you) about the rite for the śūdras and others as told by (my) preceptor.

295-304. Uttering the word *Śiva* the wise one should consecrate the sacred ash. Taking it seven times, he should put it on (i.e. apply it to) his head, (uttering:) 'To Śiva'. It is said that (he should put the sacred ash) into his mouth (afther uttering

the word *Śaṅkarāya* (i.e. to Śankara). He should put it on his chest after saying 'To the omniscient one'. Uttering the words *Salutation to Sthāṇu* (he should apply the sacred ash) to the private parts (of his body). Saying 'to Svayambhū' he should apply it to his feet. Then the sacred ash is purer. It is said that the entire body should be dusted with the sacred ash after uttering *Namaḥ Śivāya*. (Then) he should, having washed his hands and having sipped water, be composed. In the absence of darbhas gold should be (used). In its absence cow's hair (should be used). In its absence dūrvā-grass should be (used). In its absence silver should be used. Having offered the sandhyā prayer and having muttered (the names) of the goddess, he should go to the temple of the deity. The altar for the deity or a raised platform for the deity should be pure and made of clay. It should have the arrangements of lotuses etc. on it. It should be painted with four colours or with white colour only. (Then he should arrange) beautiful lotuses, Svastika-figures, blue lotuses etc., a mace, a conch, a trident and so also a drum; the five shrines as told by Śiva, so also the Phallus of Śiva, the tree yielding all fruits, kulaka, kolaka; it should have six angles, three angles or even nine angles. The swing should have twelve angles, so also wooden sandals and fans (should be kept).

305-309. The intelligent man should also fashion with powders (the images of) Viṣṇu, Brahmā etc. on the altar; or the wise one should arrange these where the worship of the deity would take place. The best (materials of worship are those) that are fashioned by his own hands. The mediocre are those that are purchased. Lowest are those that are begged; and the meanest are those that are (secured) forcibly. Whatever is secured with force, whether proper or improper, is fruitless. He should do everything properly, with red rice, japā flowers, kalamā rice, white or red rice, or ears just coming out from the paddy plants, according to the proper order, and with placing lotuses etc. which are said to be the best, the mediocre and the lowest. He should face the north or the east.

310-316. I shall tell (you) about the seat as I have seen it or heard about it. It should be made of silk, hide, which are like cloth, wooden or of palm-leaves; or of wool, gold, silver, and

copper or made of dry (cakes of) cowdung. He should make the seat (also) of the hide of tiger, ruru deer, antelope or deer. (Thus the seat) made of hide should be known to be of four kinds; so also it should be of bandhujīva (a kind of tree) as (anyone of of these) is available. He should sit in the padmāsana posture, or in the svastika posture. He should be seated with darbhas and with the sacred ash (applied to his body); he should control his breath and his speech. He till then is of the form of the deity. In the end he should practise meditation. He should meditate upon Śiva of a subtle body remaining at the end of the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (and of the measure of) twelve fingers, (Śiva) moving within (the bodies of) beings, in the cave (of the heart) and in all forms. (He should meditate upon Śiva) who is having all ornaments, who is endowed with qualities like (being) small. He should keep him in his heart; he should fill his (own) body by means of his parvasion.

317-322. Due to that brilliance the sin in the body perishes as gold becomes crimson or white due to its contact with mercury. Having fashioned the pure seat covered with twelve leaves (or eight or three leaves), he should place the Phallus there. Then he should think of Śiva remaining in the cave (of the heart as placed) in the Phallus. Into the pitcher that is cleaned, he should put water which is cleaned, perfumed with fragrances and containing fragrant flowers, and which is consecrated with (the sacred syllable) *Om*. Restraining the breath and (the utterance of) *Om* are not prescribed in the case of śūdras. In place of the restraint of the breath (they should have) meditation and (in place of) consecration with *Om*, (they should utter the word) *Śīva*. He should place near him the materials of worship like sandal, sacred rice-grains etc.; and then he will make a solemn vow: 'To please Śiva only, I shall worship Śiva.'

323-328. Having made a solemn vow like this, he should then invoke (the deity) etc., till (the deity is given) a bath. Then he should give bath (to the deity) with the hymn *Namaste* etc. and according to the rite of the Śatarudriya. A stream (of water) that is unbroken is called *muktidhārā*. He who bathes the deity with that (i.e. muktidhārā) for a month, while muttering (the names of) Rudra in a low voice, once, thrice, five times, seven or nine times or eleven times (is meritorious). This (bath) should

be known as *muktisnāna*; (when continued) for a month, it gives salvation. The bath (should be given) with (the accompaniment) of the Śaiva lore (i.e. hymn) or merely with (the utterance of) *Om*; or with clay pot and pieces of coconuts, with bell-metal, pearls, or string of flowers. Thus he should bathe the lord with materials as told and as are available.

329-343a. I shall tell (you about) the rite of the horn, and about how it would be fit for the bath (to be given with). Having cleansed it before and after, he should make a very glossy and small peg, and should cut it somehow. With (water from) the bucket placed at a low region near the door and with darbhas he should bathe the deity. Thus is said to be the water-form of the gavaya-horn. At the door having joints, he should fashion a staff, bent and of the shape of a peg; at the place of the plank he should fashion a goblet having even number of holes with a staff. There only he should cause to fall (the water) remaining in the pitcher (placed in) a machine above. He should make it fall with the other (i.e. the right) or with just the left hand. He is said to have put the muktidhārā. It is pure and destroys sins. Having thus installed the (representation of) the lord of gods, he should bathe it with the five products of a cow or with five sweet things, or with three sweet things.[1] Having adorned the deity with decorations and having again bathed the great lord, he should offer cold (water etc.). (Then) he should bring a piece of cloth, a sacred thread, pañcagandha, camphor, agaru (sandal), or (ordinary) sandal. Or both should be mixed. (Then) he should worship Śiva's Phallus. The entire seat may be full (i.e. fully made) of sandal, or according to his real wealth. The worship (should be offered) silently; he should offer seasonal flowers, like śrīpatra, sarala, according to his capacity, and unbroken. The incense of many materials, or similarly guggula (a fragrant resin) only along with ghee (made from the milk) of a cow are recommended for a full incense. He should offer incense according to his capacity, so also lamps burning with the ghee (made from the milk) of a cow, or he should offer lamps burning merely with ghee, and other offerings. He should offer flowers procured according to his

1. Pañcāmṛta—The collection of five sweet things used in worshipping deities. They are: milk, sugar, ghee, curd and honey.

capacity. Then he should respectfully offer (water for) washing the mouth and tāmbūla. He should go round and salute (the deity). Thus the worship is accomplished. Then the five constituents of singing (should be gone through).

343b-347. They are: Songs, instrumental music, (recital of) a Purāṇa, dancing and mirthful talk. He should also wave the light (before the deity), offer a cavity-ful of flowers and everything. He should apologise to the deity, then dismiss the deity; this is said to be an upacāra[1]. Similarly, ornaments, umbrellas, chowries, fans, Śiva's sacred thread and service to him are said to be six upacāras. He who would worship Śiva with thirtytwo upacāras in a day, will certainly have all his sins destroyed. The worship with thirtytwo upacāras is the best.

Sadāśiva said:

348-349a. O best among the monkeys, it is like this. I shall tell you about the worship. The couple of my feet are fit to be worshipped. Be the worshipper of all. Having thus propitiated the Phallus, you propitiate me.

Hanūmat said:

349b-354. My preceptor has certainly enjoined on me the Phallus-worship only. O god, I shall do it first; then I shall worship your feet.

Having just spoken like this, he saluted the lord, and became (engaged) in the worship of Śiva's Phallus. He should go to (i.e. he went to) the bank of a lake and having made a sandy altar, should arrange a seat made of palm-leaves. Having washed his hands and feet, and having sipped water, he became composed. He bathed with (i.e. applied) sacred ash; and again having sipped water, he controlled his speech. On the altar for the deity he put lotuses; then the monkey who had taken the posture called padmāsana, made a very beautiful (seat) of the palm-leaves. Having, along with the nyāsas, restrained his breath, he, endowed with pure meditation, saluted the great god and muttered (his names) thereafter.

355-362a. Then he also made an effort to worship the god.

1. Upacāra=service; worship; act of worship; article of worship.

He brought pure water in a couple of the hollows of palāśa-leaves. Placing the fire, to the accompaniment of three hymns, which was in the pitcher on the head, he made invocation etc. up to the bath only. Then he took (the representation of) the god in the hollow made by the palms of his hands to bathe him. Having observed, the monkey did not see the god and the seat. Seeing only the Phallus in his hand, he was full of fear. The great meditating sage said (thought) this: 'What sin have I committed so that (only) this Śiva-Phallus without the seat remains in my hand? I shall certainly die today if the seat does not come (back). I shall mutter the Rudra(-hymn); then the great god will come.' Thus having resolved in his mind, he muttered the Śatarudriya (hymn). Even then the great god did not come (there). Then the lord of the monkeys dropped Rudra on the ground. Vīrabhadra came (there). "O devotee, why do you weep? Tell me the cause of your weeping."

Hanūmat said:

362b. This Phallus is without the seat. See the heap of my sins.

Vīrabhadra said:

363-367. If the seat does not come to the Phallus, do not do a rash act. I shall burn the world if the seat does not come (back). See and show me the Phallus. (Let me see,) if Vīrabhadra saw the Phallus and (noted that) the seat had not come back, he desired to burn all the worlds.

He threw fire on the ground; in a moment the earth burnt at that time. Then he burnt the seven nether worlds, and again set out to lift them. He burnt the five upper worlds, the abodes of the people. Taking (out) with his nail the citron-like fire produced in his eye on his forehead, the lord put it on the palm of his hand.

368-375. If the seat would not come, then certainly the worlds are burnt. The brave Vīrabhadra knew (that the seat) did not come (back). The noble ones like Sanaka, having come to know (about this incident) through deep meditation, came (there). The brāhmaṇas came to the excellent hermitage of Gautama, but did not see the origin of gods (i.e. Śiva) though

he was there. They praised (him) with eulogies from all the Vedas: 'Salutation to that god of gods; salutation to that (god of) pure lustre and inconceivable form. Salutation to the lord of gods; salutation to the pure one concealed by the Vedas. Salutation to Śiva, the first god; salutation to (Śiva) having a snake as his sacred thread. Salutation to him who supports everything with the drops of the three (Vedas)—the heap of the joy of the gods. Our repeated salutation to that Śaṅkara whose eight forms are: earth, air, ether, water, moon, fire, sun and soul also, and who is known (only) through knowledge.' Having heard this praise, Śiva, who had given (back) to Bhaga his eyes, said to Viṣṇu: "Go and bring here those brāhmaṇas." They were brought there by Viṣṇu. They bowed before the god. Śaṅkara spoke (these) words to them: "Why have you come (here)?"

The sages said:

376. O god, heaps of the ashes of the twelve worlds (burnt by Vīrabhadra) are seen. This forest alone remains. (Please) note the destruction of the worlds.

Sadāśiva said:

377. We have a doubt about the burning of the five worlds that are above (the earth). How is there the shower of (burning) charcoals? Or how (i.e. due to what) is the great sound?

The sages said:

378-388. Now we have fear from Vīrabhadra. He alone, like one desirous to drink, has dropped the shower of charcoals.

Then the god called Vīrabhadra and said to him: "O Vīra, what is (this)?" Vīra (said:) "This was done due to the loss of the seat of the Śiva-Phallus of Hanūmat. To know the heart of the monkey, I did this great (deed)." Then the god, treasure of kindness, made (everything) as before. The supreme lord made all the worlds burnt (by Vīrabhadra) as beautiful as before. Then the universal soul (i.e. Śiva) said to Vīrabhadra; Śiva embraced him, smelt him on the head and gave him a tāmbūla. Then Hanūmat performed the worship of the lord. He then said to a gandharva

having a lute and wandering in the forest, these (words:) "Give the lute to me." (The gandharva said:) "I shall not part with my lute. It is (dear to me) like my (own) life." The lord of the monkeys said: "The lute is (dear to me) like my own life." Then when by the stroke of his fist the gandharva fell down, he took the great lute endowed with notes and strings, and made it joined with a bottle-gourd resembling the form of a royal tree. Putting it on his chest, he came singing in the vicinity of Śiva. He worshipped the feet of the god with pure flowers of bṛhatī. Then the lord gave him a boon and (a span of) life till (the end of) the kalpa. He also gave him another (boon)—capacity to cross the ocean.

389-395a. He with his body well adorned with all decorations, having lessened the brightness of the gods with his own brilliance, of a pleasing form and an auspicious body, honoured all gods. The great god (i.e. Śiva) took a yellow pair of washed garments (and said to Viṣṇu): "O god Viṣṇu, you take this auspicious (pair)." The giver of wealth gave a red garment to Brahmā, and gave a good pair to (each of) all the gods, sages, demons etc. Rāma too, hearing this, offered a pair to Śambhu, so also a very subtle, very costly golden ornament. Then Rāghava, seated comfortably with his ministers and family-priest, also with hosts of many sages, kings and monkeys, after having eaten (food), on the bank of Gautamī, said to Śambhu who knew the essential nature of the Purāṇas: "You alone know the hundred secrets of all the ways of life. O brāhmaṇa, tell me what is the peculiarity of which yuga."

Śambhu said:

395b-401. In Kṛta (yuga) meditation alone is the best. In Tretā (yuga) sacrifice alone (is the best). In Dvāpara (yuga) worship (is the best). In Kali (yuga) charity, a recital of Viṣṇu's name (are the best). Everything is recommended everywhere, but not meditation in Kaliyuga. Due to the minds of men being in difficulty, being deluded, O lord, they do not have a firm mind in religious rites, in the Vedas and in the codes of law (smṛti). So also in sacrifice, in the exclamation of Svadhā (made at the time of offering oblation to a deity), and in listening to the Purāṇas. So also (they do not have a firm mind) in sacrifices,

sacred places and serving the gods; in offering sacrifices to deities, in the duties of their own castes, in remembering god: nowhere (have they a firm mind) in Kaliyuga. Therefore, men are incapable of having religious merit lasting for a long time. Due to the time being short a man is capable of giving (gifts). Therefore, for those who are polluted by Kali, there is no expiation. The destruction of the sins of some takes place due to expiations, not in any other way.

402-411a. All these—one who knows Brahman, one who performs the śrāddha ceremony at Gayā, one who goes to Kāśī—are inferior to him who knows the Purāṇas; so also the listener of a Purāṇa (is inferior to him), O Rāma. The brāhmaṇa who expounds a Purāṇa is superior, due to his explaining the meaning according to yugas, due to his convincing himself and others, and due to his illumining Brahman (or the Vedas). Even the sin committed by him would not stick. Then what about (sin) from another (source)? The Purāṇa would destroy certain other sins. There is no doubt that all the sins of him who believes in the Purāṇas, looks upon the speaker (of the Purāṇas) as his teacher, and upon the giver of the lore of Brahman (or Vedas) as superior to his kinsmen and relatives, perish. The worshipper of the great lord should go to Śrīśaila; the Purāṇa destroys the sin of men in Kaliyuga. O Rāma, I shall tell you an account (that) formerly (took place) in Kaliyuga. Listen to it. There was a brāhmaṇa named Gautama who was destitute of the Vedas. He had two brothers Puṣṭi and Paśu who (also) were destitute of the Vedas. With them (i.e. with their help) he did husbandry, and obtained prosperity. He also gave some wealth and grains to the king. Once he said a few words to the king: "Give me (some) authority. I shall not lose wealth. The two brothers of mine are capable."

The king said:

411b-412a. A brāhmaṇa is qualified for the religious rites as told by the Vedas. The brāhmaṇahood of a brāhmaṇa employed at any other (job) than that perishes.

Gautama said:

412b-415. This is a way of life (followed) in other yugas.

The way of life in Kaliyuga is not like that. O king, behaving like a king is said to be the duty of kings. A brāhmaṇa who is extremely emaciated, is not at a fault if he practises it. Agriculture is the duty of śūdras. A brāhmaṇa is not to pursue it (even) in a calamity. Therefore, I shall live as a kṣatriya; grant me (a few) villages. I like to live as a kṣatriya at other place than this. (I do) not like anything else.

(The king) said, "All right", and gave (a few) villages to the brāhmaṇa.

416-421a. He, the wicked official of the villages, behaved differently. He ate flesh, he drank liquor, he uttered bad words; similarly he approached others' wives; he snatched away the wealth of others; he indulged in gambling; and he, the eater of bad things, ate the flesh of an animal struck with a poisoned weapon. He did not worship the lord of the worlds—Śiva or Viṣṇu. The king, after some time, spoke (to the brāhmaṇa) who behaved badly like this: "O brāhmaṇa, having given up brāhmaṇahood, you have secured śūdrahood (i.e. have become a śūdra). Therefore, I shall dismiss you by my order." "I do not want brāhmaṇahood. The condition of a śūdra is better for me. Without that, even if they are brāhmaṇas, they do not enjoy. Therefore, śūdrahood is better for me. O lord of the earth, I am not able to give up all this."

Śambhu said:

421b-423. When the bad brāhmaṇa spoke like this, the king remained silent. He, equal to a śūdra, ate food with flesh. Once that man of bad behaviour remained in a pavilion on the street. He heard this verse being recited by a brāhmaṇa; and the verse recited by the brāhmaṇa remained in his heart:

424-426. "Those who are greatly devoted to Viṣṇu go to a place higher than the highest. Those who hate the great lord (i.e. Śiva) will not go there." Also on hearing the explanation he said to the public reader of the Purāṇas: "Of what kind is said to be Nārāyaṇa? And how is Maheśvara? What is said to be the great path? How is hatred explained? What is that known to be the highest? What is higher than that?"

The public reader of the Purāṇas said:

427-429. That highest is Brahmā's place, whose only characteristic is the manifestation of happiness. Higher than that is Viṣṇu's abode. It is superior to that of Brahmā. That highest place is described as having (the quality of) indestructibility. In it the (supreme) man is Viṣṇu. The lord, O lord, dear one, is the highest. Water, due to the (supreme) man being born in it is called Nara. Nara (i.e. water) is his abode; therefore, he is declared as Nārāyaṇa.

430-431. Those who have a devotion to him are said to be tatparāyaṇa (i.e. devoted to him). He who is the controller of the principles like mahat etc., and whose eyes are the sun, fire, and the moon, and who is the lord of Umā would be (i.e. is) the great god (Śiva). Hatred should be known to be the enmity towards the lord, the highest soul.

Śambhu said:

432-441. In this way the brāhmaṇa who read the Purāṇa, uttered these words. Thinking (about it) he again said: "What would be the fate of (a person) like me?" Then the public reader of the Purāṇas said to him: "Listen, I shall tell (you) about your fate. With all efforts duly take an expiation. Practise religious merit according to your capacity at the proper time and according to the proper rules. Being free from sins, you will then reach an excellent condition. Or being attentive, listen to a Purāṇa every day. Or free from hopes, worship the great god, the trident-holder (Śiva), or Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu), the god whose eyes are like lotuses and who destroys suffering. Or take to renunciation for good. Be devoted to the knowledge of Brahman. Or go to the lord of Kāśī, and obtain death for securing salvation. Or go to Gayā, and try to offer a śrāddha there. Or mutter every day with respect the Rudra(-hymn); pleasing Rudra, the essence of all the Vedas, and the destroyer of sins. Or go to Śrīśaila, or to Kedāra, if you please. Or practise bath in Māgha every year. What is the use of talking too much in this matter. Always be devoted to piety. (If you do) like this, you will not live in hell, O you mean brāhmaṇa."

Gautama said:

On hearing the Purāṇa from your mouth, I shall do all (this). Also tell me the sacred precepts, the cause of faith and the taboos.

The public reader of the Purāṇas said:

442-448a. (These are) prohibited: flesh, liquor, enjoying another's wife, gambling, boasting, harshness, falsehood, deceit, censure of god of gods, reviling preceptors, seniors, gods and expounders of Purāṇas and codes of laws, white egg-plant, living on bottle-gourd, citron, safflower, the rice called lohita, lotus, awl, coconut, pumpkin gourd, kovidāra fruit, cooked oil, human milk, so also milk of a rhinoceros, of a female donkey, the milk of a woman recently delivered, so also of a female goat, of a camel, of a one-hoofed animal, of a deer, sheep and of human beings, so also the milk of a calf-less cow and of one that is in heat, salt that is touched, the juice of coconut in a bell-metal vessel or in a copper vessel, honey in a lead vessel; he should never have butter-milk in a glass-vessel or have flour mixed with curds, smeared with ghee. A burnt offering or a cake offered as an oblation shines in a clay-vessel.

448b-453a. A wise man, desiring auspiciousness, should not serve a stranger in (this) world. The smearing of the inside of a vessel with a powder, or eating therefrom (is prohibited). Similarly eating betel-nut, and crushed (betel-)leaves (is prohibited). The eating of ripe betal-nut brings about a union with worms. So also salt added to milk merely with the hand (is prohibited). In (countries like) Sindhu, Saurāṣṭra, Kamboja, Magadha and Siṁhala milk accompanied by salt does not lead to a sin. In other countries all (kinds of) milk and salts lead to sin. There is a doubt here in case of drinking. What is the use of talking much in this matter? Good men should avoid what is censurable.

Śambhu said:

453b-464. Having heard these words of the magnanimous brāhmaṇa, he went to his own house, and being afflicted thought: 'Even a great man does not know whether death would

come at night or by day. In the other world there may be happiness or unhappiness. In this world there are pleasures and entertainments. The pleasures and pains of the worms and insects and of human beings etc. are separate for each being. The difference in purpose also is well-determined. Even for one being the condition is not of one kind (only). At the time of birth there is great ignorance. In infanthood there is very little knowledge; when the steps stumble (i.e. in early childhood there is little understanding; it is also very little in childhood. In adolescence there is interest in sport; in youth there is a longing for carnal pleasures. When youth has passed there is the desire to secure wealth. In old age there is a desire for enjoyment, but (the old man) is not capable of enjoyment. He suffers from rheum of the eyes, phlegm, saliva, folds, greyness and trembling; the senses are overpowered by asthma, wind, and are defective. He is not able to hold anything, nor does he know anything. He would show (i.e. he shows) his private parts when wives of others are there. He is engaged in scratching his testicles, and is cruel due to the nature of living. He raises his garment, moves his buttocks, and scratches them. Eating (i.e. trying to eat) the mouthful he is not able (to do so) due to phlegm. When there is cough there is wind passing from the anus with a sound. So also the feces come out, and phlegm also comes out. He is rebuked by his daughters-in-law etc. and children laugh with clapping.

465-471. Having given a thought to the going out of the elders he was repeatedly invited for food etc. Having censured the eatables, food etc. and having for a long time condemned the hot (food) he again thought: 'I am a man who has done very bad deeds. How shall I eat? How shall I sleep? How shall I stand? How shall I go? How can I reach the other world (i.e. heaven)?' He was thus always worried. He, not having a thought for the highest one, did not bow down. O Rāma, he went to the house of a brāhmaṇa, well-versed in the Purāṇas. With his face bent down through shame, he said: "What (should) I do (now)?" At that time the brāhmaṇa, the public reader of the Purāṇas, said nothing; knowing that he was a sinner he drove him away through his disciples. Gautama too, going out,

remained outside the house, at the door. To him who was (first) seated on the ground and who somehow reached the brāhmaṇa pondering over the meaning of the Purāṇas, a seat was offered (by the Paurāṇika). He did not occupy it. O Rāma, seated on the ground, he said to (the brāhmaṇa) who knew the Purāṇas: "I shall go through an expiation. Let it be done here only."

The brāhmaṇa said:

472-474a. Narrate fully the sins committed by you.

He too, saying, "I have done no sin", wept, and being extremely afflicted fell on the ground, saying, "how, O dear one, (can I save myself)?" The brāhmaṇa then said to him: "There is no expiation if a major sin is committed three times."

Gautama said:

474b-475a. O noble reader of the Purāṇas, how am I sinful even when I have come to you? If I am sinful even now, then the company of an excellent brāhmaṇa (like you) would be fruitless.

The public reader of the Purāṇas said:

475b-478. In the decision about the expiations of all sacred precepts are the (only) authority. If one would say anything about it then that would not be an expiation. (The expiation) is said to be gone through once, if (the sin) is committed once. For the second (sin) it would be double. For the third (sin) it is said to be triple, and for the fourth (sin) there is no atonement. You have committed many sins. Even the fourth one you have committed deliberately. How am I able to tell an expiation to (a person) like you?

Gautama too said again: "Where should I go now?"

479-487. O Rāma, the brāhmaṇa, the public reader of the Purāṇas, remained quiet. Gautama too went to the great Śrīśaila. Then, having bathed in the river, and having seen the lord Mallikārjuna, and having observed three fasts (i.e. having fasted for three days), he had Śivarātri (i.e. it was the day of Śivarātri). He who was very much grieved, observed the fourth

fast; he also broke his fast by (eating) fruits and barks of trees on the new-moon day. Then the brāhmaṇa went round Śrī-śaila, keeping it to his right. He, extremely emaciated due to worry and heaving, then went to the temple. 'How will I, remaining silent, accomplish freedom from sins? Which is my very great, infinite sin that is inconceivable? (Even) having heard (about my sins) nobody would say to me—Go through an expiation. But on hearing some Purāṇa, it will be known.' Thinking like this, he said to (the brāhmaṇa) who knew the Purāṇas: "O dear one, may the revered one expound one Purāṇa to me. Quickly make me go through the sacraments like the one performed at the time of birth; I shall listen to the Purāṇa after becoming a twice-born; thereafter, I (shall) go through an expiation. If a Purāṇa is narrated to me, it will be helpful to me. So I determining the meaning of the Purāṇa shall do (whatever) is possible."

The public reader of Purāṇas said:

488-489a. I shall duly narrate the Purāṇa destroying sins to you, according to my knowledge (of it), according to my capacity, as uprightly as possible and according to the proper rules. Which Purāṇa do you desire (to hear)? I shall narrate that only.

Gautama said:

489b-490a. Tell me which Purāṇa should be said to be liked by all, and hearing which there would be no difference felt between Viṣṇu and Śiva.

The public reader of Purāṇas said:

490b-494. That Purāṇa which is called Kaurma is said to be telling about the non-difference between the two gods. The sin of him who listens to it first, perishes. There would be no danger for him who would be its reader. If a sinner desires to hear it, his wife perishes; moreover, one difficult thing I shall tell (you) and that is the absence of the censure of the listener and the speaker. If the listener has love for the expounder, it becomes manifest through the merit only. When meritorious behaviour which shows (the path to) salvation, is noticed, then the great

god (i.e. Śiva) is pleased, and Viṣṇu gives the desired fruits. He has emancipated his dead ancestors. They obtain the highest state.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN

Reciting and Listening to Purāṇas Is Meritorious

Śrī Rāma said:

1. O best brāhmaṇa, how did (the brāhmaṇa) knowing the Purāṇa explain it to the mean brāhmaṇa to whom heaps of sins had come?

Śambhu said:

2-7. Union takes place in teaching and learning. When they go together, O Rāma, in a year the sin of a sinner goes away. O you descendant of Kakutstha, when the knower (i.e. the reader) of a Purāṇa knows all the essential things, then even repeated heap of sins perishes, as the heap (i.e. column) of smoke perishes when a large fire perishes. A moth is capable of destroying a lamp, (but) not (capable of) destroying fire. As one who frees the mortals seized with the fear of ghosts etc., so a public reader of Purāṇas destroys the sin committed by others. One who knows a spell would send away (the ghost etc.), and not he who is afflicted. Similarly, a public reader of Purāṇas does not receive any sin. One who knows Purāṇas, destroys the sin committed by himself or by others, and even (the fruit of) a very wicked sin.

8-11. One who has discrimination looks equally upon (Śiva) the lord of Pārvatī and upon Viṣṇu. He knows the acts of the world and those that are told in the Vedas; he mutters the Rudra(-hymn); he is very desireless. He is contented; he is calm; he is diligent in work; he is mature; he practises abstract meditation; and is controlled, as your reader of Purāṇas—the

revered sage Vasiṣṭha—is, who has remained by your command in Ayodhyā and has protected the entire earth. The demon rushed to you. At the advice of Śukra the demon came to (attack) you. (He thought:) 'I shall kill him when he is asleep. Otherwise there is no chance.'

12-16. Then the brāhmaṇa Vasiṣṭha, to whom your well-being was dear, knowing this (thought:) 'There is no doubt that the demon will kill Rāma who is asleep and unaware. The demon has obtained a boon from Brahmā. I have to keep him off'. Thinking like this, the brāhmaṇa sage took the army and went out. The sage was unable to kill the demon who was immune to death. Then the great sage himself became a demon and said (these) words: "Why have you come to this forest resorted to by sages?" He said: "The king (i.e. Rāma) kills the demons. I have come to kill him." The sage said: "What have you to do with him, alive or dead? Having eaten my flesh, and having fought with me, go (back)."

The demon said:

17-20a. How can you, a demon, be fit for my food?

Then Vasiṣṭha too, becoming a human being, stood in the sky (i.e. air). He spat on his head and struck him with his fist. He struck the demon. The sage made him flee. The two running (after each other) went to the ocean. At that time, the demon was seized by a crocodile living there. The sage was in Ayodhyā as before.

Śambhu said:

20b-22. Therefore, he who knows a Purāṇa, should do what is agreeable to him. I shall tell you the auspicious manner of listening (to a Purāṇa). On a holy day in the bright half (of a month), when the day and constellation are in union, when there is the (proper) Karaṇa, an auspicious moment, when there is the strength of the planets and stars, when old Jupiter remains with a young, wise Planet (a Purāṇa should be heard).

23-25a. (It should not be heard) in a dark fortnight, on an eclipse-day, or in the vicinity of an atheist. A man should listen to a Purāṇa having the characteristics as stated before.

(He should listen to it) in a pure house, or on a pure altar, or in a place of learning, on the bank of a river, in a temple, in an assembly hall, in a beautiful monastery on the road, or in auspicious halls, O Rāma.

25b-30a. Having himself saluted the best brāhmaṇas, and especially him who knows the Purāṇa, a man should fashion a seat above (all other seats) and superior to all (other seats). He should gently say (to the reader of the Purāṇa): "Come to (this) religious seat." He should declare what is to be done on the day of the commencement of (the recital of) the Purāṇa. Having given the expounder of the Purāṇa auspicious, fine, new garments and ornaments for his hands, neck etc., so also a proper seat, he should honour him with garments etc. After having worshipped Viṣṇu having the complexion like that of the moon and having four hands, and having put on a white garment, with sandal, flowers and sacred grains, and having offered him a tāmbūla, he should, for the removal of all difficulties, reflect upon him, of a pleasing face.

30b-34. Having honoured the members of the assembly, he should then pray to Gaṇeśa. He should worship him with the hymn: *Oṁ namaḥ* etc. (Then should follow) the eulogy of Sarasvatī. The commencement (of the recital) of the Purāṇa should be done in the morning. O Rāma, on the day of commencement three, five or ten auspicious verses (should be read). Double this number (should be read) on the second day. O Rāma, (the reading of) more verses than on the second day is prescribed for the third day. The narration and the hearing should go on without a break on all days. When (proper) arrangement is made, he should give the preceptor, the reader of the Purāṇa, tāmbūla etc. and should also listen to it on the next day.

35-39. The scripture says that every day Purāṇa should be listened to. If a man listens to the Purāṇa as a vow, he undoubtedly goes to that place wherefrom the Purāṇa (has come). There is no doubt that the sin committed on the day would perish, if he who desires to listen to (the recital of) the Purāṇa, has heard even one verse. He who would listen to the Purāṇa like this, would be free from the bond of the sin of a brāhmaṇa's murder; so also from (sins due to) drinking liquor, snatching

gold, and the sin due to (enjoying) his teacher's wife. So also all the other sins which are committed and were formerly committed by men (perish). So also sins committed by the listener and the speaker in this world (perish).

40-49a. In Kaliyuga all brāhmaṇas do not know all things. Therefore, even if the narration is faulty, it gives fruit like the act of charity. Vyāsa, and none else, understood the import of the Purāṇas. I know it especially more than even Vyāsa or even Brahmā. In Kaliyuga, self-study, penance, hymns or oblation do not become so fruitful as listening to Purāṇa (is fruitful). There is no doubt that by listening to each Purāṇa even great sin perishes, as by living on Śrīśaila. Therefore, the knower of Purāṇa is the preceptor. He is venerable to the listeners and destroys (their) sins. There is no preceptor superior to him who would give the highest position. Those preceptors who are regarded as knowers of the hymns and Vedas, are not capable of giving all knowledge. Therefore, they are not teachers. O Rāma, generally goblins who are the ghosts of brāhmaṇas know the Vedic hymns, and not ones who know the Purāṇas. All who are averse to Purāṇas do not see (i.e. know) everything. Therefore, one who knows Purāṇas is a master who destroys sins. His worship is the worship of all. Troubling him is offending all. As among all gifts, gift of knowledge is praised, in the same way the public reader of Purāṇas is blessed; and giving a gift to him gives great fruit.

Rāma said:

49b-50a. What should be given to the public reader of Purāṇas? How much (should be given)? In what way (should it be given)? What kind of Purāṇa should be avoided? What kind of the reader of Purāṇas should be avoided?

Śambhu said:

50b-54a. O Rāma, a man should cause to give (i.e. should give) (the eatables having) the six flavours, food, drinks, oily substances, a house with furniture. All these are sufficient. (If) more (are given) greater fruit (is had). He should also give much wealth, a soft, decorated garment, ornaments of proper value.

(These) he should give according to his capacity. Every day he should give sandal, flowers, or only sandal, or merely a flower, and seasonal fruits also. Similarly he should give him a tāmbūla, and salute him devoutly.

54b-58. At the close (of the reading session) of the Purāṇa, he should give gifts etc. O king, more (things) like land, gold etc. should also be given. Nobody remaining silent (i.e. not giving anything) should listen (to the Purāṇa). The worship (should be) done by the members of the assembly or by one only. At a temple worship should be done by all according to their capacity. O Rāma, a man should honour the knower of Purāṇas at a sacred place. O king, I have already told you the characteristics of a listener. I shall now tell you about the characteristics of a public reader of Purāṇas.

59-60. (A public reader of Purāṇas having the characteristics mentioned below should be avoided:) A man without a family (i.e. one not born in a noble family), a man having a great (i.e. an incurable) disease, a great sinner, a man who is condemned, a man without pure conduct, a man without (i.e. not versed in) Vedas and codes of laws. Also, a man having (i.e. a devotee of) another god, a man having a stinking speech, a defective man or a man having an additional limb, a man who has married a woman having a husband, a thief, one who harms beings and one who is condemned.

61-64. O best king, now I shall tell you about the Purāṇa that should be avoided. (The reader) should recite that Purāṇa which is narrated by the ancient wise ones, or one which is narrated by the great sages, or which the sages like Vyāsa have narrated. He should read the text of the Purāṇa, and should explain it after (properly) thinking over it in any language (like) a regional language, O Rāma. A man would not get the (desired) fruit by listening to a text in the regional language. Whatever the explanation, it is good for the Purāṇa. Therefore, O lord, ask for the Purāṇa which I shall (i.e. should) expound.

Śambhu said:

65-68a. Thus spoke the public reader of the Purāṇa. Gautama also listened to it. He himself gave three garments to

the noble brāhmaṇa. It is learnt by us that he first listened to the Kaurma Purāṇa. He gave the (reader) more gold and bright garments. Then he listened to Laiṅga (Purāṇa), then to Vaiṣṇava and Vāmana also. So also to Pādma, Gāruḍa, and Saura, and Brāhma as well. Thus that Gautama listened to eight Purāṇas.

68b-73. Then he listened to Rāmāyaṇa, and also to Kaurma again. He always muttered the hymn *Śiva Nārāyaṇa.* He died, and went to Brahmā's place. Brahmā honoured that brāhmaṇa who then went to Viṣṇu's heaven. Being honoured by Viṣṇu, he then went to Śiva's abode. That best sage Gautama was honoured by all. I have also narrated the rules for listening to Bhārata. Formerly Vyāsa composed that auspicious book in three years. By listening to it (a man gets religious merit). He who expounds Bhārata should not salute any brāhmaṇa except an excellent meditating sage. He who expounds Bhārata should be honoured by all.

74-77. That brāhmaṇa who every day expounds or would read Mahābhārata, is superior to all, and would emancipate all men. He who expounds one parvan or all parvans or some parvans, becomes free from all sins, and is distinguished in the offering to gods and deceased ancestors. A man should salute that brāhmaṇa only; he should honour that worthy brāhmaṇa only; he should always feed him only; he should offer everything to him. The manner of honouring him at the time of exposition (is:). He should be honoured with garments etc. and a man should honour him according to the rules.

78-81. At the conclusion (of the recital) of Ādiparvan, (a man) should give (the reader) three garments, so also gold according to his capacity. At (the conclusion of the recital of) Sabhāparvan, a pair of garments (should be given). At the conclusion of the recital of Ānuśāsika, Āraṇya and Svargāroha, the same (kind of) honour should be done (to the reader) as is done at the time (of the conclusion of the recital) of the Ādiparvan, O best among men. At (the conclusion of the recital of the) Karṇa, Aśvamedha, Virāṭa, Śalya and Droṇa parvans, three fine, pure garments should be given, or a couple of niṣkas. At (the time of the conclusion of the recital of) other small parvans, he should bring (and give to the reader) two niṣkas.

At (the time of the conclusion of the recital of) Harivaṁśa, he should give the reader three garments with a niṣka.

82-84a. He should give (the reader a piece of) land at the time of the conclusion (of the recital) of the entire Bhārata. A man should worship the reader at the conclusion of the recital of every kāṇḍa, when Rāmāyaṇa is listened to. He should cause to give (i.e. should give) enough land or even gold. The words of the speaker, i.e. the preceptor destroy all sins. O best king, (they lead to) material welfare, religious merit, fulfilment of desires and salvation.

84b-88. All wise men become successful due to their listening to the exposition (of a Purāṇa-text). By (just) one listening (i.e. by listening just once to a Purāṇa) all sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa perish. Have the men not heard about it on the earth? A man should every day honour the expounder (of the Purāṇa) with (the gifts of) a vehicle, wealth, gold etc. so that the heap of his sins perishes. Even other Purāṇas recited by sages destroy the sins of the listeners, especially of the speaker. The mind of him who would expound all the thirtysix Purāṇas, or listens to them, is never divided.

89-93a. The first Purāṇa is Brāhma; the second is said to be Pādma; the third one is Vaiṣṇava (i.e. Viṣṇu Purāṇa); the fourth one is said to be Śaiva; the fifth is said to be Bhāgavata. Bhaviṣya is said to be the sixth; Nāradīya is declared to be the seventh; Mārkaṇḍeya is said to be the eighth; the ninth is Āgneya (i.e. Agni Purāṇa); Brahmavaivarta is said to be the tenth; then (there are) Laiṅga (i.e. Liṅga Purāṇa), Vāmana, Skānda (i.e. Skanda Purāṇa), Mātsya (i.e. Matsya Purāṇa), Kaurma (i.e. Kūrma Purāṇa); Vārāha (i.e. Varāha Purāṇa) is also said (to be one of the Purāṇas); Gāruḍa (i.e. Garuḍa Purāṇa) is also said (to be a Purāṇa); so also Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa. Thus the wise know the Purāṇas to be eighteen.

93b-97. Similarly I shall tell about the Upapurāṇas hereafter. The first one is Sanatakumāra; after that (comes) Nārasiṁha; the third one is said to be Māṇḍa; then there is Daurvāsasa (i.e. Durvāsas); then Nāradīya; the next is Kāpila; then is Mānava; then is said to be Auśanasa; then comes Brahmāṇḍa; then there is Vāruṇa; there is one called Kālikā; so also there are Māheśa and Sāmba, Saura and Pārāśara, Mārīca, and the

one called Bhārgava; so also Kaumāra. (These) are said to be eighteen Upa(purāṇas). Manu would be (i.e. is) the expounder of the eighteen Purāṇas.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTEEN

Narration of the Rāmāyaṇa of a Former Kalpa

Sūta said:

1-4. Rāma said to the sage: "Perform the rite of the (evening) prayer; this sun is setting; this flock of birds is going to the nests." Having abandoned his conveyance, he himself, desiring to offer his prayers went to the northern direction. Songs were sung by (the gandharvas) Hāhā, Hūhū. His glory was praised by the chief bards. Rāma went to the bank of Gautamī. His pair of feet was washed by Hanūmat (the son of Vāyu). His hand was supported by Jāmbavat. He reached the excellent river Gautamī. Holding kuśa (i.e. darbha) in both his hands that Rāma went to the excellent quarter of Varuṇa (i.e. the Western direction). Having made a respectful offering to the deity according to the proper rite, Rāma who was delighted, muttered (the hymn) in his mind (i.e. silently).

5-8. Rāma, after having solicited Varuṇa, saluted, in due order, Śambhu and Vasiṣṭha. Being blessed by them, he went to the deity (i.e. reflected upon the deity) in his mind, and after his feet were washed by Hanūmat, he offered oblations into the fires. Then, being praised by bards and panegyrists, he set out. The sky was, as it were, smeared with bright rays of the moon, and was, as it were, a canopy everywhere having the flowers of bright stars. Then he went to the palace. The king (i.e. Rāma) went to the assembly-hall fashioned by the old minister and having many seats. Then that Rāma, having made the sage sit, himself occupied the first seat. The groups of monkeys with large bodies were seated around him in (proper) order.

9-13. Seeing the king comfortably seated, that brāhmaṇa Śambhu then said proper words: "O best king, you, honoured by all, remain here. What is the thing in your heart i.e. what is your desire?" The descendant of Raghu, having heard the brāhmaṇa's words, desired to hear a story. His clever words were just then heard by all. "I desire to hear a wonderful tale referring to me or telling about the destruction of the demons." Then the king said this: "The murder of Kumbhakarṇa took place first and Rāvaṇa was killed afterwards. Who is this best brāhmaṇa who, causing ungodliness (to spread) among all the people, narrates it in a different way after having gone to the king's place? Should he be punished or honoured by me?" Then Jāmbavat spoke to this best of the Raghus about the story. "This is not your Rāmāyaṇa (i.e. not your account as told by Vālmīki). This is recognised as prepared (by someone else). O lord, now I shall tell it in detail. Listen to it. It was formerly heard by me from the son of the lotus-born (Brahmā)." Requesting Jāmbavat, Rāmacandra said (these) words:

Śrī Rāma said:

14-18. Narrate that tale of the past. I have curiosity to listen to it. Who propounded it and who knew it?

Then Jāmbavat spoke: Salutation to the Creator (i.e. Brahmā), so also salutation to (Śiva) having the moon as his ornament and to Viṣṇu. Now I shall narrate the ancient Rāmāyaṇa, by listening to which sin committed during the entire existence perishes. King Daśaratha who was equal to ten warriors fighting from chariots, who was full of great wrath, desired to conquer with his great army the city named Sumānasa. He called Vasiṣṭha, the son of the lotus-born (Brahmā), and saluted him. Permitted by the sage, he, mounting upon a horse having a body (white) like the moon, and saluting Viṣṇu, took out the expedition with an army of a hundred akṣauhiṇīs.

19-27. Sādhya (the king of that city), surrounded by his own army, faced Daśaratha to fight with him. The war between the two took place. Having fought for a month, Daśaratha seized that (king) Sādhya. Then, Sādhya's son Bhūṣaṇa, having a few attendants, fought with Daśaratha. Daśaratha too,

observing Sādhya's son to be the ornament of world, did not desire to fight. (He thought:) 'How (should) I kill one like this? When he is killed, what will be (the condition of) his father, his mother and dear wife of full-grown youth? On his body are, as it were, seen flowers, having the receptacles of lotuses with fresher petals, due to embraces, kisses and rollings. My son, similar to him in complexion and age, handsome like him, causing great delight, eaten up by a bear (and thus) dead, comes to my recollection (i.e. I remember him). He, as it were, desires to protect me. He changes my mind.' Thus thinking in his mind, be commenced seizing the boy. That Sādhya also became subservient (to Daśaratha). He too, looking upon the depression due to the defeat as joy, lived happily with the boy.

28-33. Daśaratha also, living there for a month, and observing that pleasure which one gets from seeing the son, thought: 'Oh! this seeing the face of this (boy) is capable of removing all sorrows. Nourishing a son is equal to my conquering of all countries. It just makes me who remember the separation from (i.e. death of) my son, unhappy. Therefore, I shall ask him how such a son is born.' Thinking like this, he asked him. Sādhya also showed the entire path of salvation to the king (i.e. to Daśaratha): "(A man) should worship Viṣṇu and Śiva together. He should fast on all the Ekādaśī-days. He should propitiate brāhmaṇas on the Dvādaśī-days. Having justly procured the food, sauce, along with the seasonal fruits and flowers, he should bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu with cow's milk and besmear it with the powder of kidney-beans. Then he should bathe (the image) with pleasing water, and besmear the entire body (of the image) of the deity with fragrant sandal rubbed by himself, and with excellent musk; then having worshipped (the image) with Tulasī-leaves, and jasmine flowers, karavīra-flowers, blue and other lotuses and red lotuses, with droṇa-flowers, with maruva, damana, girikarṇikā, and ketakī-leaves, as are available, he should propitiate the deity with (the hymn of) twelve syllables, with the Puruṣa-sūkta (hymn) or with the repetition of the deity's name or with the sixteen requisite articles, should salute (the deity), and after dancing, should apologise to the deity. So also he should practise vows to please Viṣṇu.

34-40. The revered sage, being pleased, gives the desired

son. So propitiate him." Thus he spoke to Daśaratha. He too installed Sādhya there (i.e. on the throne), went to Ayodhyā, and did all like that. When the sacrifice to obtain a male issue was over, the image of the sacrifice having a conch, a disc and a mace in the hands, came up from the Āhavanīya[1] and said to the king: "Ask for a boon." The king chose (four) sons; he said to (the deity): "Give me four sons who would be very pious, would have a long life, and help the world." The king had four queens: Kauśalyā, Sumitrā, Surupā and Suveṣā. They said to the king: "O lord, let one son be born to each wife (of you)." Then Kauśalyā said: "If this god is pleased, let him be born of me."

The king said:

41. This Viṣṇu is solicited (to give that) which is desired by me: "O Viṣṇu, O lord of gods, O lord of Kamalā, O you holder of a conch, a disc, and a mace, O you fearful one, O you whose couple of feet is saluted by all like the regents of the quarters in the creation, O you eternal one, O Hari, be pleased. My repeated salutations to you."

The lord, thus praised (by the king), said to the king.

Viṣṇu said:

42-45a. I shall be born as your son on Kauśalyā.

Then Viṣṇu entered the oblation of rice and barley boiled for presentation to the gods and manes. The king divided that oblation into four parts and distributed them among his wives. Then Rāma was born from Kauśalyā, Lakṣmaṇa from Sumitrā, Bharata from Surupā, and Śatrughna from Suveṣā; and a shower of flowers fell from the sky. The four-faced (Brahmā) himself came and performed the ceremonies like those performed

1. Āhavanīya—A consecrated fire taken from the householder's perpetual fire, the eastern fire; the other two fires being: (i) Gārhapatya—one of the three fires perpetually maintained by a householder, which he receives from his father and transmits to his descendants and from which fires for sacrificial purposes are lighted, and (ii) Dakṣiṇa—the southern fire.

at the birth of a child. He named Rāma as Rāma due to his being extremely pleasing in the three worlds; he named the second son Lakṣmaṇa for his being fit due to wealth and qualities like form and valour; (he named the third son) Bharata, since he protected the earth from burden; (he named the fourth one) Śatrughna, since he killed the enemies.

45b-46. Having named them thus Brahmā went home and the childern grew. King Daśaratha having seen the boy Rāma who walked, who looked like the young moon, whose lips were like the bimba-fruits, whose nose was high and was like the sesamum-flower, whose jewelled leaf(-like ornament) moved in front of his crest, from whose ears ear-rings were dangling, the necklace of big pearls on whose chest was dishevelled, whose golden bracelets were bright, whose jewelled bracelets and rings were tinkling, whose girdle was fashioned with gold and gems, whose feet looked charming due to the jingling anklets, whose middle toes were adorned with rings, whose large soles of the feet were adorned with the marks of a diamond-pin, a goad and a lotus, whose shanks were like quivers, whose thighs were like the trunks of elephants, whose hips were large, whose waist was slender, whose navel was round like an eddy and deep, whose chest was large like an emerald-rock, whose neck resembled a conch, whose face was like the orb of the moon, whose forehead was like the half (i.e. crescent) moon, whose hair was dark and curly, who was engaged in playing, who had become grey due to dust (particles), whose eyes were reddish like the petals of a fully blown red lotus, who was dusted as Śiva with the sacred ash, who was naked like Śiva, had his heart full of joy, and having embraced and kissed his son, he firmly clasped him against his chest.

47-49. Then the boy also got on his lap from one side, and with his eyes charmingly fixed on him said something. The king, looking at his son asking (for things) here and there and saying, 'Father, I go; father, I sleep; father, I play' and thus repeatedly deriving joy from his son, became happy. Then once, when the king had come (to the dining hall) to eat, Rāmacandra, with his mind attached to child-sports, and having many toys in his lotus-like hand, was jumping and running, and taking with his left hand the food from the golden plate, decked with gold,

and lying before the king, threw it on the king. This too the king looked upon as pleasure (i.e. even this act of Rāma pleased the king). Rāmacandra did such and other (acts).

50-55. Once when Rāma was playing, a stormy wind knocked him down, and he fell down crying. In the meanwhile the ghost of a brāhmaṇa seized Rāma and he fainted. Then the boy, his companion, crying hither and thither, informed the king of Rāma in that condition. Then the king took Rāma and spoke to Vasiṣṭha. He asked him: "What is this (that has happened) to Rāma?" Then Vasiṣṭha took sacred ash, consecrated it, and got rid of that ghost of the brāhmaṇa. He asked him: "Who are you?" and he said: "I am a brāhmaṇa, proud of (my knowledge of) the Vedas. Having frequently snatched away the wealth of others, I became a Brahma-ghost. Think of my acquittance."

Vasiṣṭha said:

56-57. From now onwards you will experience demonhood (i.e. will live like a demon), (go to hell,) and then (after having) a bath in Gaṅgā, and having offered a hundred bilva-leaves to Śiva, and then (again) having bathed, you will be free from sin. If you might do (acts of) religious merit like that I shall give you a (good) status, and after that enjoy an excellent position.

Hearing these words of Vasiṣṭha, that ghost of a brāhmaṇa, due to (the acts of) religious merit as advised by Vasiṣṭha, got a divine body, and having saluted (him), he went to heaven.

58-60. Having invested Rāma with the sacred thread at the proper time, Vasiṣṭha taught him the Vedas, the Vedāṅgas, both the Mīmāṁsās, and science of politics; he also taught him archery, the science of medicine, science of music[1] and dramaturgy, and of singing, the science of building houses, of omens[2], and various rules of war. Then Daśaratha who desired to get (Rāma) married, sent his messengers to the kings of various countries.

61-62. Then one messenger quickly came to the king, and said: "O king, the lord of the Vidarbha country is the king Videha by name. His daughter is Vaidehī whom he obtained

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1. Bharata—Science of music and dramaturgy.
2. Śakuna—Science of omens.

from a sacrifice. She is like Lakṣmī in beauty; she is endowed with all (good) characteristics. She is proper for Rāma. The king is ready to give her (in marriage) to Rāma. So go (to that king) quickly." Then he (i.e. Daśaratha) sent Vasiṣṭha and others. They went there, and having found out an auspicious moment, decided it; (then) they came to Ayodhyā and informed the king; and with Rāma, and with kings, they quicky (went) with many elephants, horses, carts, palanquins, swings.

63. Many ladies came there to celebrate the auspicious ceremony of marriage. They were very beautiful and were skilled in the acts of pleasures and amorous pastimes. They knew the various acts of gandharvas. They were adept in the science of love. Their breasts were soft and hard, and reached their necks. Their lotus-like faces had big and small foreheads and bimba-like lips. Their braids had curly and long hair. They had put on golden ornaments on their ears. Their teeth appeared reddish due to the japā flowers, adorned by the down rising due to the act of bathing. Their eyes were clear and tremulous like the small glittering fish. Their ears were like conches. Their noses were adorned with big pearls resembling the stars. Their cheeks were like mirrors. Their noses were like sesamum flowers. The nipples of their breasts were slightly bent in the middle. The wounds made by the teeth (of the lovers) on their lips resembled the indragopa insect (of red and white colour). Their bodies appeared even and tall. They were round in all parts. They were not very fat. The top knots of their garments were like balls. Their armpits were bent round. The armpits resembled the petals due to the down recently standing up and due their colour like that of turmeric. Their waists were soft, glossy and had fine circles. Their breasts looked charming on account of various jewelled necklaces dangling on the breasts with the neck ornament in between the two breasts, hard and large, and with the nipples slightly sunken in. Their bellies looked beautiful due to the uneven line of the short hair growing on the region round their deep navels, that had secured a foot round their breasts as a result of a series of the glances of the young. Their bellies were adorned with three folds, and their middle (part i.e. waist) could (just) be seized with the fist. Their hip-regions resembled the trunks of elephants. Their knees were soft, glossy, clean and even.

The pairs of their thighs were like the plantain trees. Their shanks had the knees slightly sunken in, were round and without fleshy swelling. Their ankles were slightly sunken in. Their feet had fine, glossy short and long toes, and were challenging Cupid with the jingling of the anklets. They were walking like swans and elephants. The ends of their lower garments touched their right toes. Above the hem of the lower garment, they had made folds which they had held in both their hands; their necks were not covered with garments (but) the garments (i.e. the bodices) of the breasts were covered with the upper garments. Their slim bodies were adorned with the fringes of their garments (hanging) from their left shoulders to their right sides.

64. Young girls, with their slim bodies purified with lightning (-like) (bright) silken garments, with their breasts adorned with various necklaces (put on) the breasts resembling lotus-buds that had shot up, talking something, and walking quickly (yet) gently (also had come there).

65. Old ladies also had come there. Then in a little wood of mango-trees, at a distance of a krośa (two miles) from Videha, Daśaratha, along with his ministers and family priests, and along with his sons like the lovely Rāma, camped comfortably. The young ones of the deer in it listened to the cooing of the various birds in the extensive regions of many bushes; in it there were various birds in the regions adorned with high and low palaces fashioned with gold; the row of trees there were adorned with the meditation and worship of the hosts of sages who were covered with the garments of campaka-barks, whose bodies were dusted with sacred ash and who had matted hair; which had a lake, the ripples on which were disturbed, being overpowered by the burden of the breasts of many young wives of vidyādharas; in which young men were invited by the young maid-servants who had gathered on the banks of the lake; the entire region of which was made fragrant with the flowers of many colours, in which prostitutes, with a desire to enjoy, had their bodies shining with the unsteady brilliance of their eyes resembling the small glittering fish, and largely exhibited here and there.

66. The king of Videha also decorated the city of Mithilā with many banners, with various palaces, city-gates, gardens and temples; it was crowded with young ladies skilled in sporting

with one another; the great supply of water of the city was embellished with sandal; its highways were adorned with people engaged in charming sports; its streets were decorated with various commodities; the places of learning everywhere were graced with the sound of (the recital of) the Vedas; in every house the study of Sāmaveda was done along with explanations of the Mīmāṁsā; where the orchards of the brāhmaṇas were having the fragrance of auspicious oblations and were full of the sacred texts like Sāmaveda recited with accents, and with each word being pronounced in its original form and independently of the phonetic changes and in due order; in which, at the entry of lordly abodes there were rewards like agaru (sandal), saffron and the abodes of the Adhvaryus; in which were ladies graced with bulb-like left shoulders looking charming due to the middle region of the breasts that were glossy and round, and that were rubbing against each other, and due to the upper part of the soft, white garment worn round the hips; which was graced with thousands of florists, smiling gently with their teeth resembling many pearl-necklaces and lips (red) like japā flowers; in which were abodes where pleasing spirituous liquors could be had; it had beautiful arches everywhere; its paths were clean; at every place desire-yielding trees were planted; its gates were adorned with plantain trees.

67-72a. The king went out with ladies who carried auspicious articles like turmeric, dūrvā, sacred rice grains, collyrium for the hair, braids, head charming due to parting of the hair, beautiful ornaments for the nose, face, so also articles like ghee, guggalu (a fragrant gum resin) and fruits put in golden pots; and (he was) also (accompanied) by other persons who had adorned themselves. At that time, the auspicious sound of the musical instruments, the sounds of small and big drums and of conches etc. became audible. The singers also sang auspicious (songs). The brāhmaṇas well-versed in the Vedas filled the entire sky with the auspicious Vedic recitals, and the family preceptors filled it with the sound of drums. Then they, accepting one another after giving sacred rice grains (to one another) and being praised by bards and panegyrists, entered the city.

72b-87. Daśaratha entered the abode made in the western

part of the city. The rest (of the people) also duly entered the abode. At that time only Nārada had come to Mithilā. King Videha worshipped the divine sage and looking to his reception, fed him, and giving tāmbūla with camphor to the sage who was comfortably seated, said to him with respect: "Tomorrow (is my daughter's) marriage. Please stay on to get the marriage (-ceremony) performed."

Nārada said:

Tomorrow the stars such as the solar stars would (only) be seen. The marriage should not be celebrated on that day.

Then the king, having called his astrologer Gārgya, asked him: "Which is the auspicious time for the marriage?" Gārgya said: "Tomorrow". Then the king looking up at Nārada and Gārgya asked (i.e. said): "Oh, this is so." Then Nārada spoke to Gārgya: "How can you give the auspicious moment?" Then Gārgya said, "Avoiding the inauspicious time, I shall give (i.e. state) the auspicious moment." Then Nārada also said to Gārgya, "Do you not know the words of Brahmā?" Gārgya, who was pleased, quoted the faults: "Formerly Brahmā has observed that a meteor, the curse of a brāhmaṇa and causeless trembling lead to the destruction of the entire undertaking.

88-92. Except in the rites of thread ceremony and consecration, in all other (auspicious) rites like the installation (of images), marriages, a man should avoid inauspicious moments. One who performs the rites after (these are avoided) is not at a fault. Afterwards I shall tell about the defect in rites like marriages". "A meteor would burn the entire family; a brāhmaṇa's curse would destroy (it); the causeless tremor would lead to death and to the disturbance of the rite." Having heard (these words) uttered by Nārada, the sage Gārgya became silent. He thought (to himself): 'Avoiding the Sun, the lord of Planets, and inauspicious time, the marriage should be performed.'

Nārada said:

93. How are the words of the brāhmaṇa? (i.e. what does the brāhmaṇa say)?

The Sun said:

94-95. The arrangement is said to (be based) on the difference in regions. In this country the marriage must be celebrated by avoiding the inauspicious time.

Nārada also consented.

96-98. He said: "The kṣatriya-marriage will take place tomorrow afternoon. So let the kings come for the self-choice marriage. O king, send messengers (to the kings)." Then, having brought all the kings with Daśaratha's consent, the king thought: 'How should Vaidehī be given to Rāma, after condemning all (other) kings?' At night, he though sleepy, did not get sleep.

99. At midnight the king, having purified himself mentally thought of Tryambaka who was with Ambā (i.e. Pārvatī), who had worn an auspicious silken garment, whose lotus-like feet were being served by all gods led by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Indra, by the leading sages like Bhṛgu, by gandharvas led by Hāhā, by Tumburu (and others), so also by the sacred texts, the codes of laws, historical works and Purāṇas in bodily forms, so also by the hosts of divine mothers, by siddhas, vidyādharas, and by the attendants led by Nandin, who removed all inauspicious things, whose region of the head was being waited upon by Gaṅgā of holy water and by the spotless moon, to whom a tāmbūla was being offered by Girijā (i.e. Pārvatī) seated on his left lap, who took it with a smile, willingly and with a glance, who was (fair) like cow's milk, whose neck was (having the colour) opposite to that of musk, who had arranged his matted hair with soft, fine, glossy, clotted hair, the regions of whose cheeks were graced with pure, golden ear-rings, whose age was twice eight (i.e. sixteen), whose region of the head was wrapped up with a skirt having the colour of large pearls like cow's milk and of Kausumbha, whose chest was adorned with (ornaments) of gold decked with various jewels, whose body was graced with a very white sacred thread, whose body had become reddish and fragrant due to the saffron (from) Pārvatī's body touching his body, who was observing and deriding Cupid's arrow, who resembled a crore of Cupids.

100-102. He (i.e. the king) muttered the Śatarudriya (hymn);

with that (hymn) only he offered desired oblations and praised (Śiva) with the Puruṣa-sūkta (hymn). Then the king saluted him and praised him.

The king said:

103. O you, having eight forms (constituted) by earth, water, sky (i.e. ether), air, fire, the sun, the moon (and) the sacrificer, O you of a universal form, O you of the form of the world, O you of the form of the three worlds, O you of the form of the Vedas and the Purāṇas, O you of the form of sacrifice, O you of the form of Nārāyaṇa, O you of the form of all deities, O you full of the three (Vedas), O you the authority on the three (Vedas), O you having eyes in the form of the three (Vedas), O you loving the Sāma (Veda), O you to whom the capital of Kubera is dear, O you who are (easily) accessible to your devotees, O you who are away from those who are not your devotees, O you who like praise, O you who like incense, O you who like a light (to be waved in front of your representation), O you who like ghee and milk, O you to whom droṇa and karavīra are dear, O you who like śrī-leaves, O you to whom lotuses and white lotuses are dear, O you who love Nandin's curly hair, O you who love bakula, jasmine, kokanada, a watery place in summer, O you who like restraints and curbs, O you to whom one with one's senses controlled is dear, O you who love muttering of a hymn, O you to whom śrāddha is dear, O you who love singing, O you to whom the Gāyatrī(-hymn) is dear, to whom the five, Brahmā (and others) are dear, O you to whom good conduct is dear, O you whose feet are worshipped by the three, viz. Indra, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, O you who manifested the disc sought for by Viṣṇu and produced from water, O you who give recollection and reasoning, O you who grant auspiciousness when remembered, O you victory on the earth, my repeated salutation to you.

104. Having heard this hymn of praise Lord Śiva said to the king: "I shall grant (you) a boon. Ask for one."

The king said:

105-108. O lord, I desire to give my daughter (in marriage) to Rāma. If, in the gathering of all beings like many kings,

demons, brāhmaṇas, someone of a superior strength and endowed with (birth in a noble) family, power and energy takes her away then my words would be falsified, and sin will come to me; (and) on the other hand, when Daśaratha capable of destroying the kṣatriyas comes to conquer all these, so also when Rāma (comes), then what will my daughter do? Whom will the king, with a big army and horses and elephants, send? What will he get done ? What will he do to me? He may destroy all the three worlds. Moreover, for me of a small energy you alone are the refuge. Tell me the remedy so that it would be helpful to the marriage, and Rāma will be my son-in-law.

Śambhu also said: "I shall do like that. Rāma only will be the husband of Sītā. Today only I shall do auspicious things for Rāma. Take this Ājagava bow (of mine)."

The king said:

109. What is the use of this Ājagava bow? You yourself (should) take (i.e. marry) Sītā to Rāma.

Śaṅkara said:

110-113. Make this pledge: "This bow is not strung. I shall give Sītā (in marriage) to him who will string it."

Speaking like this, Śiva vanished with his attendants. Even with a great effort the king could not take up the bow. Then calling Ujjvala, having the strength of a thousand elephants, he said to him: "Take (this bow)." He too, saluting his maternal uncle, having laughed loudly, having jumped, raised the bow with his two hands upto his knees. The maternal uncle (of Rāvaṇa), viz. Mārīca, alone put on the garb of a brāhmaṇa, and solicited (king) Videha: "Know me to be a guest who has come at the end of the offering to all deities."

The king said:

114-117. Welcome to you. O brāhmaṇa, this is the seat. (Please) be seated on it.

The guest also, saying, 'All right' sat there. Then the king

took water, washed his feet (with it) and after having worshipped him with sandal, flowers and sacred rice grains, and having offered him (the cooked meat of) a big goat, requested him to eat it. He too, as it were looking here and there, saw that food having six flavours and put in a golden plate.

118. At that time only Sītā came there. She had the splendour of lotus-filaments. She had put on a reddish garment. Her forehead was graced with hair which was dark and curly, which was unsteady, which attracted the minds of young men, which spilt up the sight of the seer, thereby as it were showing that ladies' hearts are like this only. Her eyebrows were like Cupid's bow. Her eyes were reddish like lotus-petals. Her nose was like the sesamum. Her reddish lips were close to her glossy, hairy cheeks, and resembled rubies. Her teeth were like (the seeds of) a pomegranate. Her lips were reddish like the japā flowers. Her chin was very beautiful. Her ears were like oyster-shells. Her neck was even and long. Her breasts were fleshy. The bud-like breasts were round and raised. She looked beautiful with many necklaces. Her figure was beautiful. Her creeper-like arms were not very fleshy. She was innocent. The tips of her fingers were moderate, even and were dyed with the alaktaka dye. She had put on various jewelled rings. She was holding a white lily. She came in front of Mārīca who was eating.

119-122. Seeing her, he thought: 'How shall I kidnap her? How shall I embrace her? How shall I do something else?' Thus (he thought). (But) not getting an opportunity, he just quietly went out. Then the gods strove to string the bow. They stood there competing with one another and disdaining one another. Indra reached that excellent bow. But he was not able to do more than (just) bending the two ends. Then the Sun took the bow, but fell down while bending it. Vāyu, the best among the mighty, seized the Ājagava bow and while lifting it with his own hand, fell down; and the bow fell on him. All laughed at that time.

123-128. In the meanwhile, demon Bāṇa having a thousand arms, surrounded by demons with many heads, and accompanied by Prahlāda came there after having mounted upon an excellent horse. Then, making the directions bright with his ornaments, making the gods void of glory by means of his glory, hearing

many songs, he was able (to lift it to the height of) two fingers, and gave up. Prahlāda and Bali also ran, but they also stopped. When the demons became quiet, very powerful kings arrived there, were unable to string the bow, (so) went away (i.e. withdrew) and remained (there). Then brāhmaṇas came there. Then Viśvāmitra took the bow, and after stringing it upto the length of a finger, stopped. The others retired.

129-132. And then in the space of the day, when the bow was silent, Rāma came with his brothers, and observing the bow, touched it. Then princes, adorned with all ornaments, came in hundreds. They saw the bow, touched it, but were unable to move it. Then other boys, led by Daśaratha's (other) sons arrived (there). Then men having canes and drums in their hands came there, and drove away all.

133. Then Rāma holding the hand of Lakṣmaṇa and adorned with all ornaments reached the bow, touched it, saluted it, went round it keeping it to his right. Then he took it, and lifted it.

134-138. When he took it, all laughed and said: "Here (i.e. in the attempt at lifting it) very mighty warriors have failed." Then that Rāma, bent the place of the string of the bow, and putting his knee on the bow, strung it, raised it with one hand, and bent it at the tip. Seeing the bow strung (by (Rāma) all kept their fingers on the tips of their noses (i.e. were amazed). Rāma also made the twang of the bow. Due to that sound the minds of all were agitated. Everywhere there was the talk; "Rāma has strung the bow".

139-141. Janaka too gave Sītā to Rāma. Having fought with the kings, and having vanquished them, he came to his own city. Then once Daśaratha consecrated Rāma as the heir-apparent, and became happy. There was a talk among all the subjects that Rāma was liked as a king due to his pleasing the subjects. Then, Suveṣā, the daughter of the king of Kaikeya, not enduring (that) Rāma (was to be) the king, said to the king (i.e. Daśaratha): "This is the time for granting my boons." The king thought: 'What should be given (to her)?'

The queen said:

142-144. Let Rāma enter (and live in) a forest for fourteen years. Let Bharata look after the kingdom.

Due to the fear of lying the king somehow accepted (her demand). Then he spoke to Vasiṣṭha about (Rāma's future): "Rāma is going out to the forest. What will happen to him? Having thought (about it) tell (me) (what is) good and (what is) bad (in his future)."

145-148. Vasiṣṭha thought over (it), and gladly spoke to the king: "Having gone to the forest, he will kill all the brave demons. He will worship Śiva in many ways. Rāma, being angry due to being separated from Sītā, will cross the ocean with the army of the monkeys, and will kill Rāvaṇa. Having come (back to Ayodhyā), Rāma will rule for many years. Having had great fame in the entire world, he will live for a long time with god Śarva (i.e. Śiva). He will be endowed with good sons, will perform many sacrifices; he, the lord, will be superior to all in virtues."

149-151. Hearing these words of Vasiṣṭha, Daśaratha, remembering the virtues of Rāma, spoke thus: "When Rāma goes out (of my kingdom), it is better for me to die." Then Rāma, having saluted his mother, father, preceptor Vasiṣṭha, the preceptor's wife, left for the forest. Then having lived for one day in the park, having arranged the matted hair, having put on a bark-garment, having worn one sacred thread, having cleaned his teeth, having tied his matted hair with one sacred thread, having dusted his entire body with sacred ash and thus looking rough, wearing on his head a rosary in place of a necklace of pearls and jewels, accompanied by Sītā adorned with a few ornaments, and followed by Lakṣmaṇa, entered the interior of the forest.

152-154. Then he killed many demons in it; did everything like you; everything like Sītā's being kidnapped took place as in your case; then he went to Ṛṣyamūka mountain, to the hermitage of Sugrīva; and having found a mango tree with a dense shadow, put up there a resort with the help of Lakṣmaṇa. He put the two bows on the tree; put his head on Lakṣmaṇa's lap, and lay on

a bed of deer-hide; listened to a known song; observed the fruit of the tree; he (then) saw a monkey, having jewelled ear-rings, tawny like gold, with the girdle of muñja grass firmly tied around his privity, having, a clean sacred thread, being very fickle, taking a fruit and throwing it to himself, scattering flowers and shoots, imitating the song, fanning Rāma with a fan, fanning him, even after having climbed the branch of the tree, having tied only the mango fruits, and said to Lakṣmaṇa: "Lakṣmaṇa, who is this monkey?" Lakṣmaṇa also said: "I do not know". Then Rāma called (the monkey) and asked him: "To whom do you belong? What is your name?"

155-157. He said, "I am Hanūmat (the servant) of Sugrīva." Having saluted him (i.e. Sugrīva; he said): "There is a man, who is like another Viṣṇu, who is young, who is dark like a cloud, who has matted hair, whose hands reach his knees, who is extremely glorious, and who is accompanied by another man resembling the sun. The two princes, endowed with all good characteristics are staying in the shade of a tree. They saw me and said to me: 'Inform Sugrīva.' Therefore, I have informed you."

158-161. Then Sugrīva quickly got up, took materials like flowers and water, and having washed their feet etc., having offered fruits, he said respectfully: "Who are you, young men? What have you, ascetic princes, come (here) for?" Having heard (these) words of Sugrīva, Rāma, with Lakṣmaṇa, said: "We two are Daśaratha's sons, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. We have come to the forest for curbing the wicked and protecting the good." Then Sugrīva said: "It appears that your help is harmful; otherwise you would have come with an army."

162. Lakṣmaṇa said: "There is another mission. This one's wife has been kidnapped by someone. We do not know (by whom). We have come to search for her. That is our (main) mission. Other (things) are incidental. For that we would even cross the ocean, we would even enter the nether world, we would even go to heaven, we would even knock down Indra, we would even strike Bali; (in short) we would do anything."

Sugrīva said:

163-165. I shall show you certain ornaments dropped by a lady who was kidnapped by Rāvaṇa and collected by me.

Saying so, and inviting Rāma to his abode, he showed them (to Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa). Rāma too observed them and having decided (that they were Sītā's ornaments), wept and asked: "Where has that Rāvaṇa gone?" He replied: "He has gone to the southern direction." Rāma formed friendship with him (i.e. Sugrīva) and asked him: "Why do you remain here without your wife?"

Sugrīva said:

166-173. My very mighty brother Vālin, having snatched away my kingdom and my wife, lives in Kiṣkindhā. I was defeated by him in a battle; all my anxiety is about killing him. If you kill him, then I also, restraining the ocean, will offer you Sītā kindnapped by Rāvaṇa and living in Laṅkā on the other shore (of the ocean).

Speaking like this, and taking an oath, he invited (i.e. challenged) Vālin for a fight, and fought with him. Then Rāma too, not being certain (about the identity of Vālin), did not kill him. Then Sugrīva fled, and said these (words) to Rāma: "Not knowing (what was in) your mind, I set out to die" Rāma also (said): "Not having particular knowledge about you two, I kept quiet. Having observed (i.e. recognised) you who would have a mark, I shall kill him." Then Sugrīva making a mark (on his person), invited (i.e. challenged) Vālin for a fight. Tārā said to Vālin: "It appears Sugrīva has some companion. Otherwise he would not challenge like this. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, Daśaratha's sons, and portions of Viṣṇu, who have come to lessen down the burden of the earth, have become his companions."

Vālin said:

174-179. I have heard that Rāma has political wisdom. A man like him would not leave a strong man and resort to a weak one. Let Rāma come. He will be frightened after taking the one who has approached him as superior. If Rāma himself comes to fight, then fight has to be gone through.

Having said so and honoured Tārā, he went out to fight with Sugrīva. Then between the two a fight of fist took place. Rāma

too struck Vālin; Vālin fell down. He said (to Rāma): "You have struck (me) with an arrow in a fight without weapons." His entire body was full of blood. Then Tārā and Aṅgada came (there) and were afflicted. Then the monkeys came to Rāma, fell near Vālin, and wept.

180-184. Then Tārā said to Rāma: "Formerly the descendents of Raghu were well-versed in sacred texts, brave and righteous. How is it, O Rāma, that you have committed a sin? You do not know the way of the life of a kṣatriya, which is followed by hosts of kings. In a fight (between two warriors) fighting with each other, victory or death would take place. The one who kills the other one (not fighting) is called the killer of a brāhmaṇa. Have you killed Vālin due to enmity or with a desire for (eating) the flesh of a monkey? The flesh of a monkey is not to be eaten. If you think that others are like that (i.e. like you) because of the absence of happiness (i.e. unhappiness) of you, or if you, through infatuation, have done this to take me (away), then (you have to remember that) you have the vow of having one wife (only).

185-187. If you havedone this for (getting) Sugrīva's help to bring (back) Sītā kidnapped by Rāvaṇa, then there is a great difference (between Vālin and Sugrīva). Your mission would succeed when Vālin, rich in might, able to bring (back) Sītā in a day, able to give (you) Rāvaṇa (just) when you remember him, and having fifty parārdhas of the army of monkeys and bears, is there. Then what is the use of Sugrīva, the monkey who is the general of seven parārdhas (of army), who has little might? What mission of you who keep your promise, would succeed" "O! what you have said and which is auspicious to all is understood (by me)." Rāma says, "By me who am a king, curbing of the wicked and the protection of the good is to be done. Vālin took away Sugrīva's wife Rūmā and his kingdom also. Therefore, there is no sin in killing one like him."

Tārā said:

188. Then Sugrīva also should be killed. Vālin, fighting with Dundubhi, entered a cave, and remained there for a year. In the meantime, Sugrīva kidnapped me and ruled (over Vālin's kingdom). Therefore kill him first, then him (i.e. Vālin).

Rāma said:

189. Tell me before which time this took place.

Tārā said:

190-193. In the eightieth year before sixty thousand years Sugrīva took away the kingdom in a battle with the demons. Then when a year was over Vālin made Sugrīva flee. He took away his wife and kingdom also. On that day only the consecration of your father Daśaratha (as a king) took place.

Rāghava said:

194-196. By the order of my father and due to the custom of not transgressing the words of elders, I curbed the wicked in his kingdom. At the time of her being kindnapped, he who was the king, did not act (properly). Or the beasts are free. Vālin, one of the two beasts, is killed. Beasts tear off one another and dislike one another. Say, since my hunting is of the beasts that are moving, stationary or bound, or of those movingaway, getting confused and having fled, when I parted company (with the king), I had given up hunting.

197-199. I have executed this hunting according to the rules of the science of hunting—(sometimes) running, and (sometimes) not running. The spot higher than a creeping plant in case of those belonging to the same family, is pierced through (*obscure*). Hunting without eating the flesh (of the animal killed) is the rule in the hunting done by a king.

Having heard Rāma's words, all nodded their heads.

200-205. Having put the hollow made by his palms on his head, Vālin said to Rāma: "I salute you, O Rāma; listen to my words. I have heard that you are actually Viṣṇu himself having in his hands a conch, a disc, and a mace, wearing a yellow garment, and the master of the world. The meditating saints think of you (only). The sacrificers offer sacrifices to you. You alone enjoy the oblations to deities and dead ancestors. You take up the form of the deities and the manes. The salvation of him who thinks about you at the time of his death, is not far

away. That you, O Rāma, is (today) seen by me. My sins have perished. O you descendant of Kakutstha, take your arrow. I am very much afflicted." Then, Rāma, saying, 'All right', took an arrow and said to Vālin, "Tell (me) what desired thing should be given (to you)."

The monkey (i.e. Vālin) said:

206-209. If the revered one is pleased, then give me beatitude. Thus, Sugrīva should be protected by you, so also Aṅgada, and Tārā (also should be protected). I, a sinner had committed a sin; I have experienced its fruit.

Then looking at Rāma, Vālin died and went to heaven. Then (Rāma), having consecrated Sugrīva as the king, entered the forest.

210-212. Then, Rāma, with him as his companion, went near the ocean, and said to Sugrīva: "Where is Laṅkā? Where is Sītā? Where is the enemy?" Then Hanūmat said: "May the lord order whether after having entered Laṅkā, having looked for Sītā, and having known the full truth, truce or war should be made. What suggestion do you make for crossing the ocean?" Then Rāma said to Sugrīva: "How can this take place?"

The monkey (i.e. Sugrīva) said:

213-214. I have crores of monkeys led by bears. Having appointed one (of them), and having known the whole (truth), what is proper should be done.

Then Jāmbavat said:

215-217. Let Hanūmat alone go and know (i.e. find out all about) Laṅkā.

Then Hanūmat went to the city of Laṅkā, looked for Sītā seated in the Aśoka-grove, talked to her, secured her confidence, devastated the grove and baffled the demons. He was bound by the demon (Rāvaṇa); he burnt Laṅkā, went to the northern shore, saw Rāma, told him the account, and remained silent.

218-220. Then Rāma had consultations with all. Jāmbavat said: "I was told by Nārada that Rāma will destroy Laṅkā through the monkeys. So we should strive to cross the ocean."

Then Rāma propitiated Śaṅkara, and told him: "I shall do whatever is told by you." Uttering these words, having worshipped Śiva and having saluted him, he said (to him) respectfully:

221. "O great god, O you who swllow great beings, O you the cause of the great deluge, O you having ornaments of the great serpents, O Mahārudra, O Śaṅkara, O highest god, O Virūpākṣa, O you having the serpent as your sacred thread, O you having the garment of an elephant's, hide O you having the ornament of the string of skulls, O you having the ornaments of the demon's bones, O you to whom ash is dear, O you who love Nārāyaṇa, O you of an auspicious conduct, O you the god of the five like Brahmā etc., O you who are known by the five-faced one, the four-faced one, and the Vedas, O you who are easily accessible to your devotees and difficult to be obtained by non-devotees, O you who are great joy and knowledge, O you who knocked the teeth of the great Pūṣa, O you who cut off Dakṣa's head, O you who removed the fifth head of Brahmā, O you dear to Pārvatī, O you whose auspicious life (-story) is sung by Nārada, O Śarva, O you having three eyes, O you trident-holder, O you having the bow (called Pināka) in your hand, O you having matted hair, O you having many forms, O you having the bull (viz. Nandin) as your vehicle, O you resembling a clear crystal, O you having four hands, O you having many weapons, O Dakṣiṇāmūrti, O lord, O god, O lord, O you having Gaṅgā (on your head), O you conqueror of Tripura, O you having your abode on Śrīśaila, O Kāśīnātha, O you the ornament, of Kedāreśvara, O Siddheśvara, O Gokarṇeśvara, O Kanakhaleśvara, O Pārvatīśvara, O giver of the disc, O you who removed the worry of Bāṇa, O you whose lotus-like feet are worshipped by the conqueror of Mura, O Soma, O you, having the moon as your ornament, O you omniscient one, O you full of lustre, O you full of the world, salutation, salutation to you."

222. Before Rāma who was praising like this, an image, full of lustre, and remaining in the Phallus, appeared. He granted fearlessness also.

223-225. Rāma saw the lord who was seated in the posture called padmāsana, who had Pārvatī on his lap, who had tied (i.e. put on) all ornaments, whose crown was very bright, who

touched the waist of the daughter of Himavat, granting a boon of fearlessness with both hands, full of lustre due to many wavy directions, whose face was smiling, whose face was pleased; with his palms joined he saluted the highest lord, and again fell (i.e. prostrated before him) like a staff. Then the lord also said to Rāma: "You ask for a boon; I am the giver of boons."

Rāma said:

226. I shall go to Laṅkā. O Śambhu, give (i.e. show) me a way to cross the ocean.

Śambhu said:

227-233. I have the Ājagava bow; it becomes (i.e. changes itself) according to the time and has no alternative. Having got on it, having crossed the ocean, reach Laṅkā.

Rāma, saying, 'All right', remembered the Ājagava (bow). The bow came (there). Rāma then worshipped it. Then Śiva took the bow and gave it to Rāma. Rāma too dropped it into the ocean. All the monkeys and Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa also got upon it; when the sixty parārdhas of monkeys mounted upon it, it reached the (other) shore according to (Rāma's) desire. Then the monkeys also having gone (here and) there, observed.

234-237. Then a demon named Atikāya saw the army of the monkeys and said to (i.e. told) Rāvaṇa (about) it. Rāvaṇa too said: "Has our food fortunately come through the monkeys, or through the human beings—Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa?" Then, when the sun went to the west (i.e. when the sun was setting), Sugrīva, along with innumerable very strong monkeys of large bodies like Hanūmat, Jāmbavat etc., went to the side of (i.e. near) Laṅkā, entered the park, ate various fruits, drank water, made the demons guarding the park flee, seized the entire forest (by seizing the trees) one by one, and ran away. Then he went to Laṅkā, the city-gate, climbed the palace, shattered it, took every pillar and fought with the demons. Some broke to pieces the hall, pounded the houses, killed all the young and the old and women etc.

238-246. Then having known that one rampart was acquired

by conquest, Rāvaṇa ordered Indrajit The monkeys also fought with Indrajit, were frightened and ran away. Then Hanūmat having come to know that all had gone out, so also knowing Rāvaṇa, and calling the monkeys and having considered Rāvaṇa, was delighted. Then Indrajit, remaining in the sky (i.e. air) only fought, and the monkeys did not notice him. Then Hanūmat and Jāmbavat jumped into the sky and struck Indrajit with the peaks of mountains. Then he fell on the ground, and Lakṣmaṇa made him go to the world of Yama. Then Atikāya and Mahākāya struck the army of the monkeys in various ways, harassed Lakṣmaṇa, fought with Rāma, hurt Sugrīva, fought with Hanūmat and Jāmbavat. The two (i.e. Hanūmat and Jāmbavat) defeated them, and capturing the two warriors, took them near Rāma, and reported to him. Rāma said to Atikāya: "Tell (us) about the war between me and Rāvaṇa and other very fearful ministers."

Atikāya said:

247-248. Having divided the army, we shall first certainly have war (with you). There is a demon by name Vidyunmālin. He is very mighty. He is a strange fighter. He is visible or invisible when he fights. He alone will fight with all monkeys. Many other strong, great (warriors) who have been taught (the use of) weapons, have come. We two also shall fight with you. Having got into the Puṣpaka, from the other side Rāvaṇa shall kill you only.

249-253. Other demons like Kumbhakarṇa also, taking their own forms, will surround and seize you; then they will show you to Sītā and kill you near her only.

Rāma said: "Oh, what cannot be accomplished by the powerful! The way of destiny is crooked." Sugrīva, getting very much enraged, looked angrily at Rāma and said to him: "These two should be killed. They should not be released". Rāma said: "They should not be killed; they should be released. Bring garments and ornaments". As soon as he said these (words), Hanūmat brought them, and Rāma gave them to the two (demons). Having saluted Rāma, (they said): "Śukra has said that when the wood bent at five places, which is seen at the

gate of Laṅkā, is broken, Rāvaṇa will be killed.

254-260. The order stated by Bhārgava written down is: 'Immediately after the cutting of the wood, he should go to the nether world.' Therefore, cut off this wood in one effort by dropping your arrow into the five parts. Then, knowing your power, we shall have a very close fight." Then knowing the words of Bhārgava, Rāma strung the bow just by touching the first end of it, and fixing the arrow on the bow, and just while making the demons and Hanūmat hear (the stringing of the bow), discharged an arrow. The arrow left the bow. The two demons marked the path of the arrow. The wood was cut off into five parts by the arrow. Seeing this they requested Rāma: "Our children should be protected by you." Rāma said: "All right." The demons entered Laṅkā. Then the monkeys went to fight at the rampart; everywhere they covered it with their hips, feet, knees, hands and backs and made it level, and then went to another rampart. Then that Rāvaṇa came (there), and made them flee by (striking them with) his arrows, and as he followed them, he went to Rāma. He struck Rāma also with five arrows. Then Rāma wounded Rāvaṇa with ten arrows.

261-275. Then a very fierce fight took place between the two. Rāvaṇa struck (Rāma) with ten arrows. Then the demon, with his body wounded by Rāma's arrows, became intent upon running (away). The monkeys and Lakṣmaṇa killed crores of demons. Then the next day, Bibhīṣaṇa discussing (this) with Rāvaṇa, said these words to Rāvaṇa: "This is the time (to use) the third means of success against the enemy. Do not think of the fourth. The fourth one, which is wrong, is not recommended for one who acts according to (the rules of) material welfare. Knowing the power of the enemy and of his own, and if his own power is superior, then war is recommended. The opposite would be destructive. You who are weak should not fight with the strong Rāma. He killed Vālin with (only) one arrow; and you have known Vālin before. He (killed) Mārīca with one arrow; and you too have fled. The brave demons are killed. Your son Indrajit also is killed. The excellent triad is broken; (so) do not fight with him. Accept his service after having given (back) Sītā to him. The wood at the city-gate, crooked at five

places, was cut off by Rāma with one arrow. Therefore, Rāma will kill you. For your sake many have perished; and many others will perish. O my brother, justice alone leads to happiness and not folly. Dismiss the loyal human wife who is embracing death, of the strong (Rāma) after honouring her. There will be a series of calamities if you unite with her when she is unwilling. The union with a woman accompanied by stinking filth is censured. If there is detachment, then doing what is prohibited leads to unhappiness. If you love her, then there would follow your death, and then (you will go to) hell.

276-281a. In vain will you die today if you unite with her; and, O dear one, you will either abandon your religiously wedded wife, or she might also die. There will be this and other sin. I shall make to you another suggestion dear to and beneficial for all. Going to Rāma and saluting and praising him say to him respectfully: 'O Rāma, loving those who have sought your refuge, forgive me. We all are vicious demons and are great sinners. Giving up (i.e. making us absolved of) the sin of kidnapping Sītā, protect our sons. O Rāma, we depend upon you. Protect or kill us as you wish.' O Rāvaṇa, we who, after having spoken like this, stand before that Rāma, will have a stable life, and a stable kingdom."

281b-283. Then Rāvaṇa said (these) words: "Oh! you are not a demon, you are not brave; you do not know the eternal way of life of a king. The best way of life for the brave-and not for the impotent ones like you, is by means of resorting to another man's wife, another man's wealth, and another man's kingdom. O prince, if you desire, join the enemy's side; get out."

284-288. Then Bibhīṣaṇa, having (first) gone to his abode, (and then) near Rāma, sought his refuge. Then Rāvaṇa went out of his city and fought with Rāma. The (other) demons also fought with Lakṣmaṇa and the monkeys. Rāma was unable to kill Rāvaṇa of a great might. Then he looked at Bibhīṣaṇa's face, and struck with his arrow the spot with a mark as told by Bibhīṣaṇa. Then Kumbhakarṇa took a great mace, brought about everything, swallowed many monkeys, and struck on the head of Rāma with (his) mace. Then with a hundred sharp arrows Rāma struck him. Kumbhakarṇa died.

289. Then Rāma made Bibhīṣaṇa perform the śrāddha ceremony etc. of Rāvaṇa and others; he got a Śiva-temple erected in his name; he consecrated just that Bibhīṣaṇa only on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of Laṅkā. He made Sītā, purified by means of her entering the fire, salute Śiva and Pārvatī; he who was given by the conqueror of (Tri-)pura full nectar-like power and life, got into the Puṣpaka, crossed the ocean, settled his army on the other side, installed (a representation of) Śiva there, and being honoured by sages and gods went to Ayodhyā.

290-291. Then accompanied by Bharata and others, and honoured by the citizens, Vasiṣṭha and (other) sages, he went home. He honoured gods like Indra who had come to him by offering them seats; having well honoured the monkeys, and having untied his matted hair, he was consecrated on the kingdom. Gods delighted by the elimination of Rāvaṇa, said to Rāma:

292. "You have put us back on our kingdoms (i.e. thrones); always protect us; you are the first (man) Viṣṇu; you have descended (on the earth) for curbing the wicked. By killing Rāvaṇa along with his relatives, you have become the protector of the three worlds. Be happy with Lakṣmī." Saying so, they went to heaven.

293-298. Then the residents of Ayodhyā, being very much delighted, said to Rāma: "You have come (back) after having killed your enemies. You saw and met Śiva. Rāma, fortunately you shine; fortunately you are protecting the subjects. You will perform sacrifices; you will cause righteousness to grow." Hearing these (words) of his citizens, Rāma, having lotus-like eyes, honoured all the citizens with (i.e. by giving them) garments etc. Worshipping the sages along with all people, the righteous one said to them: "I hope your penance is prospering; I hope your sacrifices are performed well. I hope you are devoted to your wives. I hope you worship the lord. I hope your wives bring forth good progeny. I hope you (enjoy) all excellent pleasures."

The sages said:

299. O descendant of Kakutstha, everything about the ascetics is well-settled. From here we (shall now) go home. Or, O king, what do you think?

Rāma said:

300-305. Śamhbu is pleased with him with whom brāhmaṇas are pleased. He with whom Śiva is pleased, becomes happy. Therefore, please go after takingfood here.

Saying, "All right", the hosts of sages ate excellent food, and congratulating him with blessings, and being delighted, they went to their respective abodes. Rāma also, along with wife and younger brothers, was very much pleased. He who was dear to all people ruled over the kingdom free from bad elements. Even if a sinner listens to this episode, he becomes free from all sins, and reaches the highest Brahman. The man who would remember this (episode) would not meet with a calamity; so also the same is said about him who would narrate this episode.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN

Fruit of Worship by Justly Procured, Stolen and Impaired Material

Sūta said:

1-10. Rāmacandra, of a pleased mind, ate along with the best sages, Viṣṇu, the monkeys and the bears at the hermitage of Bhāradvāja. The sky was covered with clouds; breezes were blowing gently; in that forest, there was somewhere the excellent house of Sudeva. It had eight pillars; it was fashioned with golden strips; it was (decked) with gems and pearls; it had silver pitchers in it; it was made fragrant with sandal, camphor, musk and saffron; it had multitudes of mire and was covered with pieces.*

Moonlight did not reach the walls in its middle part, and also they could not be seen by the sun (i.e. the sun's rays also did not reach them), The entire floor in the house was sprinkled with excellent juice of flowers. The entire (portion on) the north was without a construction of a wall (i.e. without a wall). On every

*कर्द्दमैर्जालकयुतं शकलोपरिसंवृति—this half of verse 4 is obscure.

pillar there were pictures; its courtyard, measuring a hundred cubits had natural parts and was fashioned with crystal. There was a desire-yielding tree in the courtyard, and it covered a larger part of the courtyard by means of its shadow. There was a dense grove of plantain trees forming the entire hedge. With the grove of the plantain trees there was the hedge of ketakī grove. It was full of the cries of peacocks, and bees were sweetly humming in it. It had the cooing of pigeons and was graced with many parks. It was thronged with hundreds of mansions; it was resounding with the notes of intoxicated cuckoos. It had many trees which were graced with big gems hanging from their branches.

11-17. The quarters were filled with the sound of the songs of the female kinnarīs. It was pleasing due to many gardens. (Nearby) there was the excellent bank of Gautamī. The abode of Bhāradvāja was auspicious and was having many excellences. It was full of many male and female servants (respectively) resembling Cupid and (his spouse) Rati. The auspicious abode of Bhāradvāja was full of various implements. Inside it was a whitewashed mansion, and there were eight orchards inside it. In the midst of them there was an extremely beautiful house. It was beautified with the palace-like abode of the great god on (all) the four sides. Each temple had graceful nocturnal instrumental music. It was just fashioned for the excellent heavenly women to rest (in it). Rāma moving out of the house of Bhāradvāja went accompanied by all to the great house in the middle of the forest. He entered it, the interior of which was covered with blankets; it had also separate seats (covered) with cloth; at the centre there was a throne; it had many seats for the sages.

18-21. Near the incomparable seat of the public reader of Purāṇas were the excellent seats for the king, the monkeys and the bears. Having seated the public reader of Purāṇas in the east, and then Vasiṣṭha and the best men, as well as Viṣṇu and the kings, he took a low seat. The sky was covered with clouds; the quarters were bright; the earth, with the seeds sown, was having good flowers. The courtyard was neither hot nor cold, had santāna flowers, and was fragrant with dama flowers. Looking at Śambhu, Rāma said (these) words: "(Please) tell (us) the story of Śaṅkara. O best sage, I who am hearing the excellent account of the great lord, which destroys a stream of

sins, am not satisfied. Tell me what the great lord, surrounded by the host of gods, did in Gautama's hermitage."

Śiva said:

22-23. The son of Vāyu, seated with a great lute, asked Śiva; "Tell (me) what the fruit would be by worshipping the lord with materials brought (after) they are procured justly. (Tell me also) what fruit would accrue if they are offered after stealing, and when materials that are collected are impaired. O lord, tell me (about these) one by one. Give the answers (to these) questions quickly. What is the use of the story, O Śambhu?"

24-27a. Then the lord said to the monkey: "I shall tell everything to you. Listen attentively. That Gautama, having worshipped the unborn Sadāśiva with (materials) procured justly, obtained this splendour. Formerly a brāhmaṇa named Ākatha, Maṅkaṇa's son, obtained as his chaste (wife) Suśobhanā. He was poor, full of pity, and without parents. He ate (every) sixth day. When, after having fasted for five days, he proceeded to eat, (just then) an ascetic came (there). The ascetic spoke sweet (words) to Ākatha: 'I who have fasted for a month, stand (here) after having come to you to eat. I shall eat if you have (food). O sage, I do not have a desire to eat in another's house.' "

Ākatha said:

27b-29. O best brahmaṇa, I do not eat for five days. On the sixth day my (turn to eat) food has come. Then I have to think what ought to be done. Come, I shall today wash your feet.

Then the meditating saint said, 'Yes,' and with his both feet being washed, desired to eat the food. He ate that food brought with ghee after it was cooked on the piece of a leaf of plantain tree. It was well furnished with wild articles; it (was) respectfully (served). Nothing was left of the food.

30-33. The ascetic Ākatha, seeing the sage to be pleased, was (himself) pleased along with his wife. The ascetic, having eaten, left. That Ākatha also, with his mind pleased, muttered (a hymn). With his wife he followed the way of the life of pigeons. The sage, with his wife, became ready for the expansion

of his austerities. Having put the lord of Umā in Śiva's Phallus on a seat, he worshipped him accompanied by his attendants. After putting the Phallus when he saw, he observed an unknown brāhmaṇa of an emaciated figure. The lord was naked, without feet, squint-eyed, a cripple with a withered arm, without ears. He recited Sāmans; he was well-versed in many sacred texts. He saw him who had come to his house.

34-36. Then Ākatha said (these) words to his wife Suśobhanā: "This brāhmaṇa of a loathsome dress is coming. Half the food should be given to him. Preserve half the food. When this day also passes, then, I think, on the sixth day you will not live for want of food. Tell me what you think?"

That Śobhanā said:

37. The (span of) life is written on the forehead. Nobody dies in between.

Ākatha said:

38-43a. Vīrabhadra had cut off the head of Sacrifice(?) of a fixed (span of) life and of a perpetual character, then what to say of human beings of a sinful nature? So if, avoiding (to give) him (food) you eat it, then I shall give him (my) food. I shall do according as you wish.

The wife said: "How shall I eat when you have not eaten? Have I formerly eaten (like this)? Listen to this another (thing). Food is the life of beings. This is actually seen by all living beings (i.e. men). Therefore, she who gives food is said to be the giver of life. Beings are produced from food; and since they grow (because of food), there is not greater gift than that of food. The gift of food is highly fruitful. The life of him who does not give to a being a drop of water sticking to the end of a shaking leaf of Aśvattha, is useless. Piety alone helps (a man) in the next world. Neither the wife nor the relatives.

43b-45a. The wife, the parents, the sons are helpful as long as a man's life lasts (i.e. as long as he is alive. They are) not (real) kinsmen. Wealth, youth, friends (of a man live) here only. He, best of those practising piety, enjoys piety here and in the next world. What about us?"

Having heard these words of his wife, Ākatha, the treasure of kindness, gave, without any apprehension, the excellent food to him (i.e. that ascetic).

45b-50. 'This is god Śiva, of many acts, who has come (here)'. Deciding like this, he washed his body—destroying sins—his feet up to his knees, his shanks and ankles below them. Then he made the brāhmaṇa sip water. Then Ākatha brought that brāhmaṇa with crippled feet to his courtyard. He lifted him, of crippled feet, and made him sit on a seat offered to him. Ākatha, having worshipped the sage, fed him. In the meanwhile, some mad man came to the house. He took the man with the crippled feet and took him out of the house. He also burnt their house, and beat up the couple.

51-54a. The brāhmaṇa Ākatha who was beaten, quickly entered the burning house to take (out the representation) of the god. Then the best brāhmaṇa took (the representation of) the god whose worship was burnt, and coming out saw the heat on his face. Despising the worship that was (thus) burnt, and seeing (the representation of the god) with a burnt body, the pious one said to his wife: "Certainly my entire body should be rendered like that (i.e. should be burnt) as the worship of the great lord (is burnt)."

The crippled one said:

54b-55. Your worship done even afterwards will be fruitful, as when other materials are burnt, people give the material like those (as were burnt). In the same way, when (the materials of) worship are burnt, worship should be done like that (i.e. with fresh materials).

Ākatha said:

56-59a. O brāhmaṇa, nothing beneficial takes place by means of the worship which is done with stolen materials. So also, O brāhmaṇa, Śiva's worship done with materials unjustly procured, does not give auspicious (things).

Saying so, Ākatha quickly started to burn his body. Then the mad man took the burnt Phallus and vanished in a moment. Then the crippled one having become Hara (i.e. Śiva) warded

off Ākatha: "O brāhmaṇa, why are you dejected? I am the giver of boons. Ask for a boon." Ākatha also asked for a very steady devotion for the feet of the lord.

Sūta said:

59b-61. Hearing this account, Rāma, surrounded by sages, was pleased. He saluted Bhāradvāja, and solicited his order to leave. Then the sage Bhāradvāja, being pleased, and having saluted Śambhu, the best sage Vasiṣṭha, Viṣṇu and the hosts of sages, dismissed them. They also went after saluting (Gautama).

The (sages) in the Naimiṣa (forest) said:

62. What did Rāma, of great lustre, along with all sages, do? So also (what did) that Śambhu of great glory (do?)

Sūta said:

63-67a. Rāma, desiring to perform the monthly śrāddha of Kauśalyā on the next day, invited excellent brāhmaṇas almost like sages. Rāma, who was singly devoted, (also) invited Śambhu who knew the entire truth, Nārada, Romaśa, Bhṛgu and Viśvāmitra. He slept on a comfortable bed on the ground. When the next morning came, he, having bathed in the morning according to the proper rites, got prepared by cooks pure food, vegetables etc. He (got) prepared various agreeable foods (dishes) to be sucked and chewed; so also thirty-six (other) dishes fit to be eaten like cakes.

67b-71a. He (got) prepared sweetened milk of six kinds, and two hundred cooked vegetables. He kept ready three hundred varieties of uncooked and mixed (articles); so also kāla vegetables, and various (kinds of) fruits. So also Rāma got ready roots and bulbs and bark-garments. With his brothers and family priest he went to the river; and having bathed in the water of Sarayū, having offered oblations into the fire, and speaking words of welcome to the guests the king worshipped the deities. Having restrained his breath, and having decided upon the object he gave them the invitation.

71b-76. Rāma invited Romaśa, Nārada at the all-god sacrifice. He invited Śambhu, Bhṛgu and Kauśika at (the rite in honour of) divine mothers. Then having prepared a circle and

having properly worshipped, he washed the feet (of the sages) with water given by Sītā. Having made those brāhmaṇas sip water he was about to go home. (At that time) a guest came (there). He was old. His figure was deformed. He was slim. His limbs were trembling. Similarly his feet and head were shaking. His (loose) skin was hanging. He was troubled by the excess of asthma. His cheeks had rheum of the eyes clinging to them. His beard was smeared with saliva. He said to king Rāma: "I am the only brāhmaṇa that remains (unfed). Give food also to me who am old and weak."

77-80. Rāma too, hearing his words, said (these) words to Lakṣmaṇa: "You wash his feet. I shall worship the brāhmaṇa". The guest also spoke (these) words to Rāma who was absorbed (in the ritual): "I desire (to have) food (only) if you wash my feet. Do you insult me because (you think these) brāhmaṇas are superior to me? You do not know the method of performing a śrāddha as is practised by the great sages. If you insult me, then all brāhmaṇas are insulted. The śrāddha (would) be harmed and you will go to hell."

81-88. Then Rāma himself washed the feet of the brāhmaṇa; and having made the brāhmaṇa sip water he took him into the house. Then Rāma having sipped water, himself gave him a seat. When the brāhmaṇas were seated on their seats, he controlled his breath, and having obtained (their) consent to the performance of his rite, he would throw (i.e. he threw) water with sesamum seeds, with (the accompaniment of) the hymn *Apahata* at the region of the door. Then he should throw it at the place where the vessels for the dead ancestors are kept, with (the utterance of the hymn) *Udīratām.* Then he should throw the water with the sacred rice grains with (i.e. by reciting) the Gāyatrī (hymn) at the place where vessels for the gods are placed. Then having sprinkled the entire (food) that is cooked, he should utter this hymn. Then having thought of the place of śrāddha as Gayā, and having reflected upon Viṣṇu, so also having meditated upon the Vasus and (his) dead ancestors. he should proceed with the śrāddha Then he should offer worship to all gods with grains of barley or rice. Then he should take along with sacred rice grains, two darbhas with their roots and tips joined. Touching the ground with his right knee, he should

offer water into the hands of the brāhmaṇas. Then, he who offers the śrāddha, should offer a seat with (the utterance of these words) *Purūravārdravāṇām devānām idamāsanam*, and should request them.

89-97a. Then having made a respectful offering on the tips of the darbhas at the north, he should turn the pot making it lie with the face on the knot of the darbhas. Then he should make the vessel lie with its face upwards, and should sprinkle it with water and golden ornaments. He should put water into the pot in which the pavitra (darbhas) have been put, with (the hymn) *Śam no devyā.* He should also (recite the hymn in honour) of all gods as long as the rite enjoined by the rules goes on. He should put barley-grains into the pot to the accompaniment of the hymn *Yavosi dhānyarājo vā.* Then he should offer water-pots mixed with honey (i.e. in which honey is placed) and with sandal and flowers. Then the respectful offering should be made with the utterance of the words: 'O brāhmaṇa, this is a respectful offering to you'. Then he should ask (the brāhmaṇas): 'May I invoke the gods'. Then saying *Viśvedevāḥ* he should put the darbhas on the head of the brāhmaṇa. He should then mutter: 'The Viśvedevas listen. May they come (here).' Then having come and being seated, he should take the pot with the darbhas. Then having thrown the water from the main vessel on his right foot, he should put the water from the pot on the right hand of the brāhmaṇa in front of the pavitraka, to the accompaniment of the hymn *Yā divyā.* Then saying: 'This respectful offering to you' and collecting the water of the respectful offering in a pot, he should put that vessel containing the water used for the respectful offering somewhere.

97b-102a. Then having put water on their hands, he should worship them with barley-grains. Requesting them: 'Worship, propitiate', he, the giver of the water, having worshipped from the foot to the head, and repeating the hymn *Gandhadvāreṇa*, he should, likewise, worship the dead ancestors, with his sacred thread hanging down from his right shoulder. Then having invested a brāhmaṇa with a sacred thread, and with the darbhas with the sesamum seeds, he should, with his left knee put on the ground, offer him a seat. Then facing the south he should ask them about the appropriate moment. Then he should put the

pot in the darbhas with their tips in the southern direction, in such a way that it lies on its face. Then having been tied with three darbhas he should make it lie with its face upwards.

102b-105a. Then having sprinkled (water) into the pots with two darbhas and sesamum seeds, he should put water to the accompaniment of the hymn *Śam no devyā*, and should put the sesamum seeds, uttering (the hymn) *Tilosi*. Then having offered sandal and flowers, he asks them: 'Are you satisfied with the respectful offering?' When they give the answer: 'The respectful offering (is satisfactory)' he should invoke his dead ancestors. Then, he should stand, and holding in his hand the respectful offering made of sesamum seeds, flowers and darbhas, he should offer the water of the respectful offering with the (utterance of the) hymn: *Uśantastvā*.

105b-106a. Then after that he should worship them, and should, as before, put the sacred thread so as to hang from his right shoulder. He should use a golden pot for (offerings to be made to) gods after having washed it.

106b-110a. He should use a silver pot for (oblations to be offered to) the dead ancestors, or as is available. In its absence a pot made of bell metal, not obtained from anyone else, is excellent. In its absence vessels made of palāśa leaves would be (used). But not a mediocre one. So also vessels made of leaves of plantain trees, mango trees, jambū leaves, punnāga leaves, parāka leaves, leaves of campā, madhūka, kuṭaja, so also leaves of mātuluṅga should be given by men at a śrāddha. Having brought the food in a ladle and ghee in hands, he should ask the brāhmaṇa about the spreading of the food after wearing the sacred thread over his right shoulder and under the left arm-pit. (He should say to the brāhmaṇa:)

110b-112a. 'I shall put (the oblation) into fire'. The reply (would be:) 'Do so.' Then having spread it out he should wear the sacred thread (in the usual way) and having sprinkled (water) should collect it. Saying *Somāya pitṛmate svadhā namaste* he should offer (oblation) to Soma. (He should also say:) *Yamāya pitṛmate svadhā namaḥ*.

112b-115a. Then he should offer the second oblation and then having scattered sacred rice grains (he should say:) *Agnaye*

kavyavāhanāya svadhā namaḥ. Then having offered oblation, and wearing the sacred thread over the right shoulder, he should surround the brāhmaṇas and go. Then he should repeatedly drop it into the vessels meant for the dead ancestors. Then he should wash the vessel meant for the piṇḍas and the ladle. Then he should arrange the vessels.

115b-116a. Then to the right side of the vessels he should offer food. He (i.e. Rāma) gave all (kinds of) food, edible vegetables.

116b-117. Then a very old guest, looking here and there, said to the calm Rāma: "Quickly salute me. I am hungry. I shall eat with your (i.e. after you) order."

118-121a. Rāma spoke (these) words: "O sage, wait for a moment. I shall now quickly salute the deities and the dead ancestors." Saying so Rāma offered the food in the vessels. He put the darbhas on the pavitraka meant for gods in such a way that their tips faced east and north, and those darbhas on the pavitraka (i.e. the two darbhas placed on the ground) meant for the dead ancestors in such a way that their tips faced west and south. They offer food and darbhas, barley grains and sesamum seeds looking upon them as 'the earth'.

121b-125. He should first offer that, saying *Ye devāḥ,* to the gods, which is touched by the thumb of the brāhmaṇa to the accompaniment of these words: *Idam Viṣṇuḥ*. Then he should offer it to the dead ancestors and then to the guest. Then saying *Devatābhyo* he should offer the prayer repeated before and after eating. Having muttered the Gāyatrī(-hymn) three times, and with his sacred thread over his left shoulder and under the right arm-pit, he should face the east; then wearing the sacred thread over his right shoulder and under the left arm-pit he should say, 'Hereafter (please) eat madhutraya'. When the brāhmaṇas have eaten, he should repeat a hymn that kills the demons, and should cause the food and (other) eatables to be served. I shall (now) tell in brief what great wonder that brāhmaṇa who was the guest, performed.

126-132a. With one mouthful he swallowed the entire (food) that was there in the pots; and said (to Rāma): "Give me that much food which would be enough for oblations to the vital airs. Why are you engaged in (performing) the śrāddha rite,

if you are unable to give this much? O Rāma, if you are unable to give (food) to me alone, then why are you intent upon giving to many (brāhmaṇas)? Deeds done rashly are not (properly) accomplished. All (the varieties of food) prepared by you are not enough even for making an offering to my vital airs. Tell me how you will give food to me and also to these (brāhmaṇas)." The hero Rāma said to him: "You eat according to your pleasure." Saying so, Rāma observed that very wonderful deed of him. Then calling Śambhu, he said: "You spread out (i.e. serve the food). I think that you are my father and Śivā, Pārvatī is my mother. I think Bhavānī is Annapūrṇā and the highest goddess."

132b-142. That Pārvatī said (these) words: "I shall give him sufficient (food)." Then Umā (i.e. Pārvatī) brought a bell-metal-vessel full of boiled rice and adorned. With (i.e. in) a golden ladle she brought fragrant and bright boiled rice. "Let this be inexhaustible for him", saying so she gladly gave once (only) the boiled rice on the right hand of the brāhmaṇa. He, with his head trembling, looked up. He had his hand stretched out. "Taking the boiled rice in the hand, give it to me. Is it sweet and well-cooked?" Śambhu's wife (i.e. Pārvatī) said to him: "Eat from your hand, then (only) I shall give." Then the brāhmaṇa again ate the food that was (placed) on his hand. Knowing that was inexhaustible, he stretched out the other hand. The goddess put the boiled rice on that hand. The chaste one gave the cooked, inexhaustible food to other brāhmaṇas (also). Then that brāhmaṇa, having seen that inexhaustible boiled rice on both his hands, stretched out another (i.e. a third) hand; and he said: "Give me excellent food, with soup and ghee." Then that goddess Śivā, dear to Śambhu, gave the inexhaustible (boiled rice) to him. Whatever the chaste lady gave was all inexhaustible. (But) again and again another (i.e. a new) hand was produced. Thus having produced a thousand hands he stopped. The brāhmaṇa said to her: "Give me a mouthful of water. O good lady, you have satisfied me. Neither Rāma nor Sītā has satisfied me."

Śambhu said:

143. Now Rāma has given you; Sītā has given you; I too

have given you. What full (food) should be given to you hereafter. Tell that to me.

The brāhmaṇa said:

144-147. I am satisfied. More should not be given to me.

As he knew that there was food on his hand, it somehow did not fall down. Seated (there) he thought a long time: 'How is it that I have (but) one hand? This is prepared for my enjoyment, and not for any other act of mine. Therefore, all this of another's activity will be empty.' Determining like this with his mind, the guest besmeared his body with (the food). That wonder took place when all gods were watching. Knowing that the brāhmaṇas were pleased, Rāma who knew the highest truth and who had a ladle in his hand, duly asked them: "Are you satisfied?'

148-153. The excellent brāhmaṇas (said:) "We are satisfied." He should, having scattered the food to the accompaniment of hymns, and facing the south, place the piṇḍa near the vessel. There only he should give mouthful (of water) to the brāhmaṇas. They threw their mouthfuls into the vessels of leaves in which remnants (of the food) were kept. Those brāhmaṇas entered the house without the guest. The guest said: "O king, I shall sip the water outside (only). O Rāma, I cannot get up. Give me your hand." Then Rāma gave his hand. (But) the best brāhmaṇa did not get up. Then Hanūmat also gave him his strong hand. Then taking the best brāhmaṇa with his other hand, the lord of the monkeys dragged him. The brāhmaṇa said with a loud cry:

The brāhmaṇa said:

154-160. Oh, clearly my hand is being cut off. Lift me by holding at any other (place) than that.

Then he (i.e. Hanūmat) covered (i.e. tied) his back up to his head with his tail, and forcibly ran over the ground. But the brāhmaṇa did not move. Then the brave monkey, cutting the ground with his feet, put both his feet on his head. The house became shattered; (and) all the brāhmaṇas stood outside. Then that Hanūmat came out along with that old brāhmaṇa. He put that old brāhmaṇa on a seat. Bringing water for the brāhmaṇa

in an earthern pot, Jāmbavat said (to him): "O brāhmaṇa, you should take clean water along with the pot. Sītā would wash the body, and Lakṣmaṇa will give (i.e. pour) water." Then Jāmbavat told Rāma all that the brāhmaṇa had said. Rāma ordered his younger brother and his wife to wash (the body of) the brāhmaṇa. Then Lakṣmaṇa brought water to wash the brāhmaṇa's body.

161-165. Then the king washed his entire body as he would wash an image. Then by Rāma's advice the two (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā) did just like that. Then the guest threw his mouthful on the face of Sītā. She, having ornaments (on her person) was covered with water. Then that chaste lady cleaned the brāhmaṇa's face full of phlegm and saliva. Again she washed, and his nose gave out phlegm. Then having made the brāhmaṇa sip water, Lakṣmaṇa said to him, "Get up". The brāhmaṇa said: "It is not possible." Then Hanūmat also came (there). The guest said to him: "I, a brāhmaṇa guest, am troubled by Hanūmat. Some time back while lifting me, the monkey dropped me down."

166-170. Then Jāmbavat said to him: "My body is soft like the down. I shall hold you. O brāhmaṇa, you will not have any harm." Saying so, Jāmbavat lifted the brāhmaṇa after supporting him with both his arms. Bringing him to the verge of the place occupied by the brāhmaṇas, he put down the sage. Then Rāma went round the best brāhmaṇas keeping them to his right. Blessed by the excellent brāhmaṇas he gave them tāmbūla and saluting, along with his brothers their feet, said: "O Sītā, you have not washed the feet of this guest. There is dirt at the couple of shanks of him. His face also is full of dirt. Wash his face properly. The brāhmaṇa cannot stand dirt."

Sītā said:

171a. It was properly washed. (The dirt) has again come out.

Rāma said:

171b-174. Again wash off the dirt. Otherwise it would be my fault.

Then Sītā, having done like that, remained silent. That brāhmaṇa, highly enraged, said to Rāma and Sītā: "O best

king, Sītā should support my feet, you should support my hands, and let Bharata fan me. Let Lakṣmaṇa dress the multitude of (i.e. my profuse) hair. Let Śatrughna remove (i.e. cleanse) the phlegm on my body with his own garment."

Sūta said:

175-182a. Then they did all that in the case of the guest as was told by him. The brāhmaṇas, men, monkeys and demons were amazed. Goddess Pārvatī and Śambhu looked at him with the knitting of their eyebrows (i.e. with frowns). Then the guest and Śambhu spoke mentally. The guest holding a conch, a disc, a mace, wearing a yellow garment, with his entire body adorned and very bright, was pleased. That Śambhu who had three eyes, who resembled pure crystal, who was adorned with all ornaments, who was (bright) like a crore of suns, who had put on a crown, who was the treasure of compassion, and who was formerly propitiated, became pleased. Sadāśiva holding the hand of the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) got up. Rāma who was very righteous, and whose body was horripilated, and whose eyes were full of joy, fell (i.e. prostrated) on the ground like a staff. His brothers, lying on the ground like staffs, saluted him (i.e. Śiva). Śiva, having raised Rāma, embraced him, smelt his head and spoke sweet words to Rāma having lotus-like eyes.

Śiva said:

182b-183a. I am pleased, ask for a boon which is difficult to be had even by Brahmā and others. I have nothing to receive from you. You ask for a boon. Do not delay.

Śrī Rāma said:

183b-187a. O lord of the worlds, I have nothing to ask for. Now I have (in my possession) the kingdom of the earth. Heaven is secured through (one's) deeds. I have devotion through seeing your feet. I am enjoying good health, (as) you see. That Sītā (my wife) is the best among women. I have subjugated all kings. My subjects are endowed with righteousness. O you imperishable one, due to your arrival I am glad. Yet I shall ask for something. Let my devotion for you be stable. So also, O god,

O lord, stay in my house for three years in this form and expounding all duties.

Śiva said:

187b-192. Let it be so, O Rāma. Everything will be possible for you.

Then the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) said to the lotus-eyed Rāma: "O noble one, ask for the boon that you desire. I am pleased with you." Śrī Rāma said (these) words: "I have nothing to be solicited. Whatever I wanted to have, I have had it from Śambhu. All else has (already) been said. Yet, O Viṣṇu, I ask for one (thing). Always be pleased (with me)." Then Viṣṇu said to Sītā: "I am now pleased with you. Ask for a boon. I shall grant it." Then Sītā said (these) words: "Before (some) time my husband has asked for a boon. I have no other boon (to seek from you). If you willingly grant (one), then let my mind (always) turn away from another man (than my husband). O brāhmaṇa, O lord, my salutation to you."

193-197. Then all the sages saluted the two excellent deities. He then said to Rāma: "(Now), eat along with your brothers. With the goddess (Pārvatī) I shall stay in your charming, secluded mansion. Let Viṣṇu who does all things, and who is accompanied by the daughter of the ocean (i.e. Lakṣmī), stay in one mansion, O Rāma, for he is very greedy." Then the revered sage Vasiṣṭha sat in front of the two in a clean, great house, rich with seats and containing many vessels. Other sages and kings also sat according to their (seniority in) ages. Then king Rāma, along with his brothers, made them sit on a soft, even seat.

198-205a. Rāma, comforting his servants led by Hanūmat, said: "You should stand round about. I shall eat afterwards. (This will not be) in a different manner." Then they all gave them respectful offerings one by one. All those who were Rāma's attendants, also ate (food). Giving them tāmbūla etc. (Rāma) fed the chief monkeys and others. Then the lotus-eyed Rāma, after they all had eaten (food), gave food to the helpless, the blind, the poor so also to the beasts, birds and animals, and started offering the sandhyā (prayer). Then the king offered his sandhyā (prayer) and muttered (the hymns), and having saluted

them occupied the throne. That Rāma, the descendent of Raghu, being waited upon by the citizens and inhabitants of the country, shone, when in the assembly, as god (Indra), the lord of Śacī, surrounded by all gods. He executed all the work of (the administration of) the kingdom along with his brothers; (then) Rāma, (calling) each one by his name gave leave to all. He also dismissed his brothers and other monkeys.

205b-207. Then the very lustrous Vasiṣṭha said (these) words to Rāma: "O Rāma, do not forget the duty that you have to perform in the morning. The venerable lord of Ambikā, the lord of the worlds, Śambhu is seated there. The glorious one should be diligently remembered and saluted." Saying, "All right", the king (i.e. Rāma) saluted his preceptor, and gave him leave; and thinking of the lord of lords, he resorted to his wife.

The sages said:

208. O preceptor, tell us what Rāma, the best among the intelligent, did after having got up in the morning. We have a curiosity to listen to it.

Sūta said:

209. Then seeing Śambhu, Rāma said to him: "(Please) narrate the tale of Śaṅkara. O best sage, I am not (fully) satisfied with (the account of) the greatness of Śiva, which destroys the stream of sins, (though) I have been hearing it."

Śambhu said:

210-217. Now I shall tell you the reply given by the lord to the remaining question. Those who wait upon the deity with materials procured unjustly, become deformed, as (for example) a demon, named Rūpaka, propitiated Śaṅkara with wealth earned unjustly. He made a bell to please the lord by (spending) that wealth only. His son was known as Sampāti. He worshipped Śaṅkara with wealth earned unjustly. Both of them died one day. They went to Śiva's heaven. Vīrabhadra spoke to them: "O Rūpaka, you offered worship with wealth that was unjustly earned; you also made a bell etc. Due to that conduct you will be deformed and will be (born as) a thief. Clearly due to

not listening to the uttarance of Śiva's name, his ears would perish due to the sound (of the name) and he would not see (the lord). By this much, O lord, you have properly offered the worship. Therefore, you will have properly offered the worship. Therefore, you will have devotion". Thus Vīrabhadra directed the attendant named Anaśana, wandering somewhere. The two, who were reduced to that state, stayed in Śiva's heaven.

Śambhu said:

218-223. I shall now tell (you) the story about the impaired materials of worship which the great lord told Hanūmat: O Rāma, listen to the account of each of the goblin-attendants of Śiva. I shall also tell you (about) the ripening of actions.

Śiva who was asked by Hanūmat to narrate (the account of) the attendants with impaired bodies said: "Listen to what is said about him who is a knower, and who will knowingly offer impaired materials to the lord: He has perspiration on his entire body; for all the time he has perspiration on his body; his garments are wet due to perspiration; his body has a small stream brought about by perspiration; drops of perspiration fall from the tip of his nose. He is seen to be unfit for touch. Formerly, he, while perspiring, propitiated the lord. I shall tell you a historical account about this:

224-230a. There was a brāhmaṇa peasant named Cekitāna. Everyday he had agricultural produce after having bathed in the morning. When the time of mid-day came, the brāhmaṇa muttered (a hymn). He then said to his wife: 'Quickly bring me food.' With the food she brought, he who always perspired and who was tormented by the sun, speedily worshipped Śiva with sandal, flowers, sacred rice grains full of (his) perspiration. When the evening came, he, with his body washed and looking very handsome, worshipped the lord of gods with means (i.e. materials) available in the season. The very intelligent one died and went to Śiva's heaven. Vīrabhadra also said to him: 'Be Śiva's attendant (named) Svedila. Formerly you worshipped Śambhu with materials touched by your perspiration. You were always full of perspiration. Therefore, you become the attendant (called) Svedila.' "

Śambhu said:

230b-231. O Rāma, thus ordered by Vīra (i.e. Vīrabhadra) he became an attendant. O noble one, see this Ghaṇṭāmukha. He was a vaiśya named Vibhāvasu in his former existence. He was pious. He was a great donor. Everyday he fed brāhmaṇas. He practised religious rites. In the morning he saluted and worshipped Śiva with flowers. He smeared a small (portion of the ground) with cowdung; and having worshipped the lord and offered him a lotus etc. he sounded his impaired bell.

Rāma said:

232. How (i.e. due to what) was his bell impaired?

Śambhu said:

233-236. Formerly there was a stout (person) known as Soma. His son, called Manda, was ten years old. He had put kulmāṣa grains cooked in fire into a bell, O king; and he had eaten them. Therefore, it had become impaired. Trying to seize that vaiśya he said these (words). The vaiśya himself cleaned (other) materials but (not) the bell. Due to his using it (without cleaning it) he contracted sin, and so became the attendant Ghaṇṭāmukha.

Rāma said:

237. When the materials of worship were purified, it was also purified. Then how could it cause sin? It is properly said that the purifier of materials is for purifying the materials(?).

Śambhu said:

238. In the ordinary parlance there will be none who will not be devoted to you. He will go to Śiva's place. The narrator also would be like that.

Sūta said:

239-242. He who narrates this story, will be like him on the earth. This most secret (account) would give the knowledge about Śiva. O brāhmaṇas, I have told you this great (account) helping (you) to lead an auspicious life. He who listens to it

devoutly, is honoured in Śiva's heaven. To the reader of the Purāṇa one should give a garment, a cow, golden ornaments, fertile land according to one's capacity. He who recites or listens to this dialogue between Śiva and Rāghava destroying the entire stream of sins, goes to the highest place.